POLICE · BUDGET · EDITION

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FAMOUS CRIMES

PAST AND PRESENT

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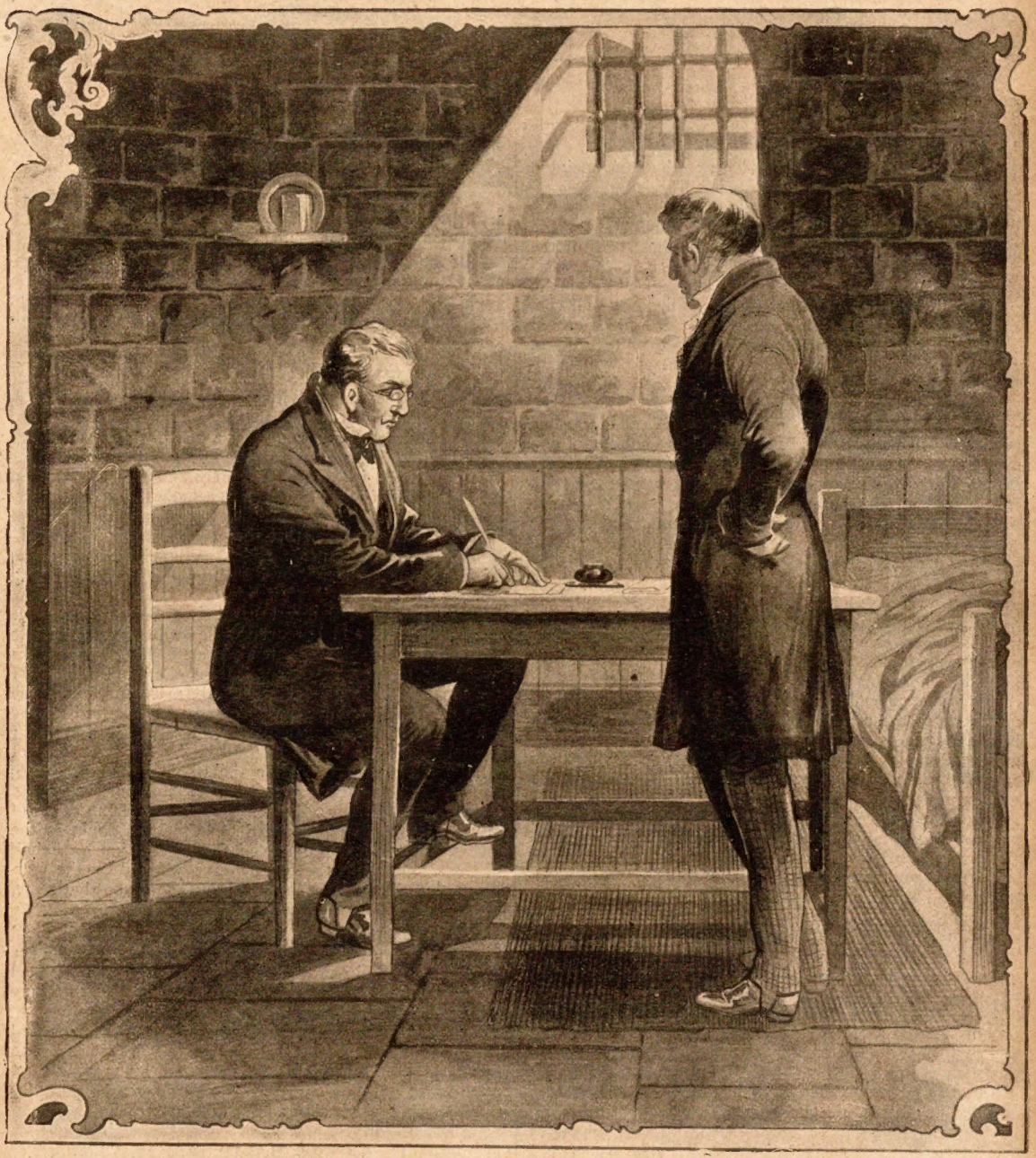


CORDER WRITING HIS CONFESSION IN THE PRESENCE OF THE GOVERNOR.

Vol. VII.—No. 80.

The Cruel and Calculated Crime of WILLIAM CORDER.

"Dream on, dream on
Of bloody deeds and death."
—SHAKESPEARE, "King Richard III.," Sc. 3.

PART II.

THURSDAY, August 7, was the day appointed for the trial of William Corder, and extraordinary and unprecedented interest was aroused throughout the kingdom by the event. The romantic circumstances of the murder, the dramatic arrest of the suspected man, the rumours and reports which the public prints had industriously circulated regarding him—all combined to excite the populace to a remarkable degree. At Bury St. Edmunds the anxiety to witness the proceedings, or to obtain early information relating thereto, was manifested by hundreds of well-dressed persons of both sexes gathered together outside the courthouse.

Nor did public curiosity finish there. A concourse had at an early hour assembled near the door of the gaol and along the road leading therefrom to the Shire Hall, to get a glimpse of the accused man on his way to the trial. He was removed from the prison at a quarter to nine o'clock, being attired very carefully in a new and spotless suit of decent black. He had his hair combed down on his forehead, having previously always worn it brushed up in front. He appeared to be fairly calm and collected, though it would seem that, whatever views were entertained by others, he himself had little doubt that the verdict must be an adverse one. He had grown stouter in prison, and was pale rather from confinement than as a result of ill-health or mental anxiety.

Upon being called from his cell, he made some inquiries as to the number of witnesses to be called against him, and also as to the names and rank of the judges by whom he was to be tried; and his question having been answered, he exclaimed, with an air of resignation, "Well, whatever may be my fate, I shall meet it with fortitude." He was then placed in a chaise-cart to be driven to the place of trial, and took his place therein with composure. His appearance was the signal for an outburst of shouts and groans, and many persons ran by the side of the conveyance all the way to the Shire Hall, in order that not an expression of his face throughout the ride should escape their observation. Corder hung down his head throughout this trying ordeal, but was otherwise little affected by the shouting and groaning with which he was assailed on all sides. On being taken to the felon's room, beneath the building, he composedly remarked to Mr. Orridge, the Governor of the prison, "What a great number of persons! I scarcely ever saw such a crowd!"

At a quarter past ten, at which time the court was crowded to excess, the prisoner was placed at the bar. He immediately became the cynosure of all eyes, the ladies present appearing especially interested in his aspect and demeanour. For a few moments he leant over the rail of the dock and conversed earnestly with his solicitor; but presently he looked up to the bench, and bowed respectfully to the judges. On account of the number of challenges made by the prisoner, it was some time before a jury could be empanelled. At length, however, the prisoner was arraigned, and the trial proceeded. The indictment was long, and contained no less than ten counts.

In the first, the murder was alleged to have been committed by the accused on May 18, 1827, by discharging a pistol, loaded with powder and shot, upon Maria Martin, and thereby giving her a mortal wound in the left side of the face; and that by those means wilfully, feloniously, and of his malice aforethought, he caused the death of the said Maria Martin. The second count laid the offence as having been committed by striking the deceased with a sword upon the left side of the body, between the fifth and sixth ribs, and thereby giving her a mortal wound, of which she instantly died; the third count stated that the murder was committed by striking the deceased with a sword on the left side of the face; the fourth that it was done by striking and stabbing her with a sword on the right side of the neck; the fifth, that the prisoner fastened a handkerchief round her neck, and thereby choked her; the sixth, that he killed her by discharging a gun loaded with powder and shot on the left side of her face; the seventh, that he pushed and thrust her into a hole made in the floor of a barn, and by covering her with large quantities of earth and gravel, suffocated and choked her; the eighth was only technically different from the preceding one; the ninth laid the offence to have been committed by the joint means of striking the deceased with a sword on the left side, and fastening a handkerchief round her neck; the tenth described it as being done by the joint force of all the felonious arts laid in the whole of the preceding counts, recapitulating the wounds, stabbing, shooting, strangulation, and smothering, as the cause of the death of Maria Martin. There seemed to be a little doubt in the minds of those who conducted the prosecution on behalf of the Crown as to the exact means adopted by the murderer; but they did not intend him to escape on that score, and framed this portentous indictment accordingly.

The prisoner having pleaded "Not guilty," in a firm and distinct voice, the trial commenced. The evidence developed the circumstances as I have already detailed them. In a moderate and well-reasoned speech, the counsel for the Crown announced the main facts to the jury, to which recital Corder listened attentively, every now and then, however, heaving a heavy sigh. The first and sixth counts of the indictment were sustained by proving that, at the time of the discovery of the body, marks were distinctly visible which showed that she had received a wound from a pistol or gunshot, and it was also established by a brother of the deceased, that the prisoner at the time of quitting the house of old Martin on the day of the murder carried a gun.

The evidence of the mother of Maria Martin created great excitement and caused a thrill to run through the crowded court. The old woman—hale and hearty in spite of her years and grief—related how she had long entertained suspicions in regard to the fate of Maria. "I began," she said, "to fear that something was amiss with my daughter. She had gone away with him before, but had never stayed away long, and had always written, for Maria was a good scholar. She had promised us to write when she said good-bye to us when setting out to meet the prisoner at the Red Barn. One night last March I had been thinking over poor Maria's last words and wondering what had happened to her and where she was. It was late when I went to bed, and I seemed to fall asleep instantly. My good man was by my side, and soon I woke all in a sweat and aroused him. I had dreamed that I saw the ghost of Maria haunting the Red Barn. In my vision the shade seemed to point towards the flooring of the barn in a particular spot, as if to indicate her own grave and to beseech with," he had replied, "Well, she will have no more children." It was proved that no bastardy warrant had ever been applied for in the case of Maria Martin, although Corder had, for purposes of his own, and to induce the girl to fall in with his plans, frightened her into believing that such a warrant had been issued.

A number of letters written to the deceased's father by the prisoner, in reference to his intended marriage with his daughter were put in and read. In one of these, Corder attributed Maria's inability to write to the fact that she had injured her hand, while in a subsequent letter he actually declared that Maria had basely deserted him and gone off with her former lover, by whom she had had a child. This gentleman was called and gave evidence. He declared that he was unacquainted with the prisoner. He had had no communication with the deceased for four or five years, and that the small sum of money he allowed her on account of the child was always sent to her parents through the medium of his legal adviser. It was proved that Corder

THE SHADE SEEMED TO POINT TOWARDS THE FLOORING OF THE BARN.

me in gestures to avenge her murder. My husband laughed at my dream, as he had laughed at my fears, but twice after I dreamed the same thing and awoke with a terrible start to tell him what I had seen. I felt convinced that my poor girl had been killed and buried beneath the flooring of the barn, and I never let my man rest till he had procured permission to search the place. The body was found in the spot indicated in my dream." In words something like these did Mrs. Martin relate to a hushed and awed court her weird experience. During its recital Corder sighed heavily, sitting with his eyes on the ground and his hands clasped tightly together. But for that dream he would now be a free man.

Other evidence strongly pointed to the guilt of the man at the bar. The doctor's evidence clearly established the fact that murder had been done, and that the deceased had been stabbed as well as shot. Corder had been seen by witnesses going to and from the Red Barn on that particular day, and on one occasion he had been observed to take a spade with him. Asked by one of his cronies what "he had done with that Martin girl he was carrying on had used this gentleman's name in a most unjustifiable and discreditable way, and the inference is that he had formed some scheme to obtain money by blackmail from this source. There are, however, circumstances connected with this portion of the case which render it undesirable that they should be gone into even at this lapse of time.

The case for the Crown having closed, Corder was called upon for his defence. He rose hurriedly and produced a manuscript paper, from which he read in a low and tremulous tone. He declared that he deeply deplored the death of the unfortunate deceased, and he urged the jury to dismiss from their minds all that prejudice which must of necessity have been excited against him by the foul imputations of the public press. He admitted that the evidence against him was fraught with suspicion, but he trusted to being able to give such an explanation of the circumstances against him as would develop to their satisfaction the real facts of the case. He then proceeded to say: "No man regrets more sincerely than I do the death of the unfortunate Maria, the circumstances attending which I am now about to state, and much have I to regret that I

for a moment concealed them, but I did so because I was stupefied and horror-struck at the time, and knew not how to act. You have heard of the nature of my connection with the unfortunate Maria; that connection was contrary to the will of my mother, and to conceal her situation I took lodgings for her at Sudbury, where she was, in fact, confined. In the usual time she returned to her father's house, in a fortnight after which the infant died; not, as has been intimated, by violence, but by a natural death. Being anxious to conceal the circumstances from my friends and neighbours, it was agreed between her father and mother and myself that Maria and I should bury the body of the child in the fields, and we took it away for that purpose. After this Maria returned to my house at Polestead, and by means of a private staircase I took her to my own room, where she remained concealed for two days. The pistols which have been spoken of were hanging up in the room, loaded. I had before that shown her the use of them, and, on returning to her father's, she, by some means unknown to me, contrived to get the pistols into her possession. It is well known that at that period Maria was much depressed in spirits, and was anxious that I should marry her, although I had reason to suspect that she was at the time in correspondence with a gentleman in London, by whom she had had a child. My friends objected to the match, and I declined it at that time. But, although poor Maria's conduct was not altogether free from blame, I was much attached to her, and at length agreed to her wishes, and it was arranged that we should go to Ipswich and obtain a licence for that purpose. Whether I did or did not say anything about a warrant having been issued by the parish authorities for her apprehension, I cannot now pretend to say; but, if I did, it must have been because such a report was abroad at the time. It was agreed that Maria should go in male attire to the Red Barn, so often mentioned in the course of the trial. You have heard from the mother of the unfortunate Maria that the latter and I had had words. As we proceeded to the Barn she was in tears. To that Barn we had often repaired before, and had frequently passed the night there. When we reached the spot words arose, and Maria flew into a passion. I told her that if we were to be married and to live together she must not go on so. Much conversation ensued, and, on changing her dress, she at length told me that if we were married we should never be happy together, that I was too proud to marry her and take her to my mother's, and that she did not regard me. I was highly irritated, and asked her, if she was to go on in this way before marriage, what was I to expect after? She again upbraided me, and, being in a passion, I told her that I would not marry her, and turned from the Barn, but I had scarcely reached the gate when the report of a pistol reached my ears. I returned to the Barn, and with horror beheld the unfortunate girl extended on the floor, apparently dead. I was for a short time stupefied with horror, and knew not what to do. It struck me to run for a surgeon, and well it would have been for me had I done so. But I raised the unfortunate girl, in order, if possible, to render her some assistance; but I found her altogether lifeless, and to my horror I discovered that the dreadful act had been committed by one of my own pistols, and that I was the only person in existence who could tell how the fatal act took place. The sudden alarm which seized me suspended my faculties, and it was some time before I could perceive the awful situation in which I was placed, and the suspicions which must naturally arise from my having delayed to make the circumstances instantly known. I, at length, thought that concealment was the only means by which I could rescue myself from the horrid imputation, and I resolved to bury the body as well as I was able. Having done so, I subsequently accounted for her absence in the manner described by the witnesses, saying sometimes one thing to one person, and at other times other things to another. I may be asked why, if innocent of the crime imputed to me, I felt it necessary to give those answers? To which I reply that some persons are driven to do acts from fear which others might do from guilt, which is precisely the case with me in this instance. It may be asked, too, why I have not called evidence to prove the facts I have stated; but, gentlemen, I put it to you whether things do not sometimes take place which are only known to the parties between whom they happen, and what direct proof can I give, when

THE TRIAL OF WILLIAM CORDER.

the only person who knew of these is dead? I can, for the like reason, give no direct proof of the unhappy woman's having got possession of my pistols. I say pistols, because I found the other loaded pistol in her reticule. As to the

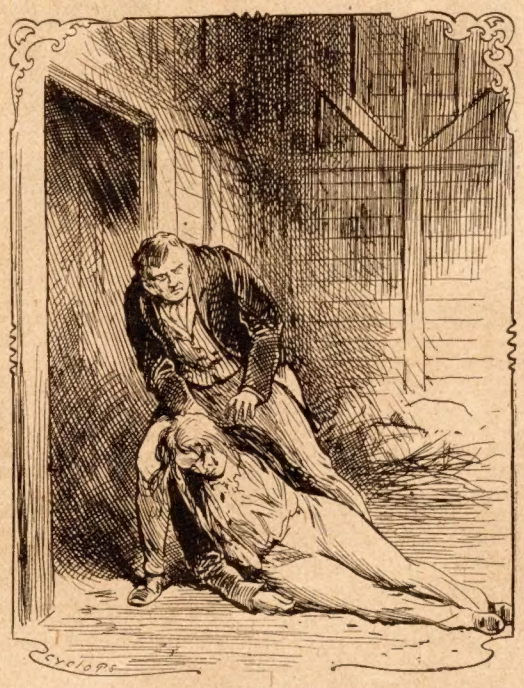
Locked up the barn.

stabs and other wounds described by the witnesses, I can only say that no stab or cut was given by Maria or myself; and I firmly believe that the surgeons would never have sworn to them were it not for the circumstance of a sword having been found in the room in which I was arrested. If any stab did appear on the body, it must have been done by the instruments used in disinterring it."

This sophistical and ingenious defence was listened to with much attention, and there can be no doubt that though few persons present in court placed much faith in the prisoner's empty version of the affair, it was the best explanation that he could have offered under the circumstances. Numerous witnesses were then called, who described the prisoner as a handsome man, and spoke as to his general good character. The judge summed up, and a verdict of "Guilty" was returned, after a fairly prolonged consultation. At this awful crisis the prisoner was first observed to raise his handkerchief to his eyes; and during the subsequent passing of the sentence of death he was visibly affected. On his return to the gaol, he apparently recovered his spirits; but the only desire which he expressed was that he should be permitted to see his wife. To this request an immediate consent was given, and at two o'clock on the next day she was admitted. The meeting was of a most distressing character, and it lasted nearly an hour. During that evening Corder was constantly attended by the reverend gentleman of the prison; but he exhibited no inclination to confess. On the following day (Sunday) he attended the chapel in the customary manner, and during the performance of the service appeared deeply affected. On his return to his cell, he threw himself upon the bed, and wept considerably for a long time. In the course of the afternoon it was hinted to him that his defence could never be credited; but he replied to the effect that "Confession to God was all that was necessary, and that confession to man was what he called Popedom or Popery, and he never would do it." It was subsequently suggested to him that he must have had great nerve to dig the grave while the body lay in his sight, when his reply was, "Nobody knows that the body —that it lay in the barn and in sight, whilst I dug the hole"; but then, suddenly checking himself, he exclaimed fearfully, "Oh, God, nobody will dig my grave!" In the course of the afternoon, he had a second and last interview with his wife, and the scene was truly heartrending. He expressed most anxious fears with regard to the manner in which she would in future be looked upon by the world, and implored her, should she ever marry again, to be cautious how she accepted a proposition reaching her through a public advertisement. The parting scene was most tragical, and the wretched woman was carried away from the cell in a condition of stupor. After Mrs. Corder had finally departed, the governor made the strongest efforts to induce Corder to confess, pointing out to him the great aggravation of his crime should he quit the world still denying his guilt. Corder then exclaimed, "Oh, sir, I wish I had made a confidant of you before; I often wished to have done it, but you know, sir, it was no use to employ a legal adviser, and then not follow his advice." The governor assented in the propriety of this and his acting on it up to the time of conviction, but that now all earthly considerations should cease. The wretched prisoner then exclaimed, "I am a guilty man!" and immediately afterwards made the following confession:

"Bury Gaol, August 10, 1828. Condemned cell. Sunday Evening.

"I acknowledge being guilty of the death of poor Maria Martin, by shooting her with a pistol. The particulars are as follows: When we left her father's house we began quarrelling about the burial of the child, she apprehending that the place wherein it was deposited would be found out. The quarrel continued for about three-quarters of an hour, upon this and other subjects. A scuffle ensued, and during the scuffle and at the time,

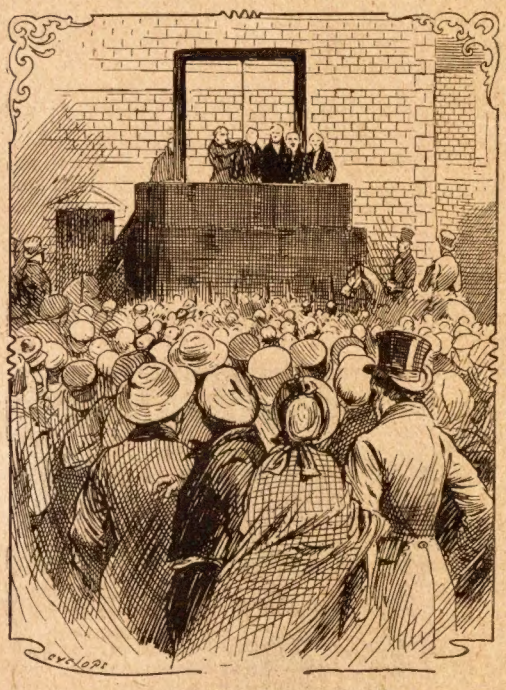


Dragged it by the handkerchief.

I think, that she had hold of me, I took the pistol from the side pocket of my velveteen jacket and fired. She fell and died in an instant. I never even saw a struggle. I was overwhelmed with agitation and dismay. The body

fell near the front doors on the floor of the Barn. A vast quantity of blood issued from the wound, and ran on to the floor and through the crevices. Having determined to bury the body in the barn (about two hos after she was dead), I went and borrowed the spa of Mrs. Stone; but before I went there I dragged the body from the barn into the chaff-house, and locked the barn. I returned again to the latter, and began to dig the hole; but the spade being a bad one, and the earth firm and hard, I was obliged to go home for a pickaxe and a better spade, with which I dug the hole, and then buried the body. I think I dragged it by the handkerchief that I tied round the neck. It was dark when I finished covering up the body. I went the next day and washed off the blood from the barn floor. I declare to Almighty God that I had no sharp instrument about me, and that no other wound than that made by the pistol was inflicted by me. I have been guilty of great idleness, and at times led a dissolute life, but I hope through the mercy of God to be forgiven. "W. CORDER."

"Witness to the signing by the said William Corder,
"JOHN GRIDGE.



The execution of William Corder.

On the next morning the confession was read over to the prisoner, and he declared that it was quite true; and he further said, in answer to a question put to him by the under-sheriff, that he thought the ball entered the right eye.

He subsequently appeared much easier in his mind, and attended divine service in the chapel immediately before his being carried out for execution. As allusions were made in the prayers to his unhappy situation, he appeared convulsed with agony, and when the service was over, although he appeared calm, his limbs refused their office, and he was obliged to be carried to his cell. At a few minutes before twelve he was removed from his cell and conveyed to the press-room, where he was pinioned in the usual way. He was resigned, but was so weak as to be unable to stand without support. On his arrival being removed, he groaned heavily and appeared to be labouring under great mental agony. When his wrists and arms were made fast, he was led towards the scaffold, and as he passed the different yards in which the prisoners were confined he shook hands with most, and, speaking to two of them by name, he said, "Good-bye! God bless you!" They were much affected by the wretched appearance which he made, and "God bless you!" "May God receive your soul!" were frequently uttered. The prisoner was supported up the steps which led to the scaffold; he looked somewhat wildly round, and an officer was obliged to support him while the hangman was adjusting the fatal cord. A few seconds before the drop fell he groaned heavily, and would have fallen had not a second constable caught hold of him. After the drop had fallen he did not struggle, but he raised his hands once or twice as if in prayer; the hangman pulled his legs, and he was in a moment motionless. In about nine minutes, however, his shoulders appeared to rise in a convulsive movement, but life was said to have long left him. Just before he was turned off he uttered, in a feeble tone, the words, "I am justly sentenced, and may God forgive me!" Mr. Orridge then informed the crowd that the felon acknowledged the justice of his sentence, and died in peace with all men.

The mob that collected amounted to many thousands and occupied every spot of ground from which a glimpse could be obtained. A considerable proportion consisted of women, and as soon as the execution was over vast numbers proceeded to the Shire Hall to obtain a view of the body, which, it was understood, would be exhibited. Accordingly at two o'clock the remains were exposed on a table in the centre of the hall; it was naked from the navel upwards. The crucial operation had been performed and the skin of the breast and stomach turned back on each side. The face and throat were somewhat swollen and discoloured, the right eye was open and the left partially so, the mouth was also sufficently open to show the teeth. On the next day the body was delivered to the hospital for dissection in pursuance of the sentence. After the execution a spirited bidding took place for the rope, and as much as a guinea an inch was obtained for it, while large sums were offered for the dagger and pistols used in the murder, which, however, as his perquisites, became the property of the sheriff,

We may conclude this history of the Red Barn Murder by giving our readers a copy of the advertisement by which William Corder secured his wife. It appeared in "The Times":

> "A private gentleman, aged 24, entirely independent, whose disposition is not to be exceeded, has lately lost the chief of his family by the hand of Providence, which has occasioned amongst the remainder circumstances the most disagreeable to relate. To any female of respectability, who would study for domestic comfort and who is willing to confide her future happiness to one in every way qualified to render the marriage state desirable, as the advertiser is in affluence. Many happy marriages have taken place through means similar to this now resorted to. It is hoped none will answer through impertinent curiosity; but should this meet the eye of any agreeable lady who feels desirous of meeting with a sociable, tender, kind, and sympathising companion, she will find this advertisement worthy of notice. Honour and secrecy may be depended upon. As some little security against idle application, it is requested that letters may be addressed (post paid), A. Z., care of Mr. Foster, stationer, 68, Leadenhall Street, with real name and address, which will meet with most respectful attention."

To this advertisement came hundreds of replies, but Corder selected his wife out of the first fifty.

Unsuited.

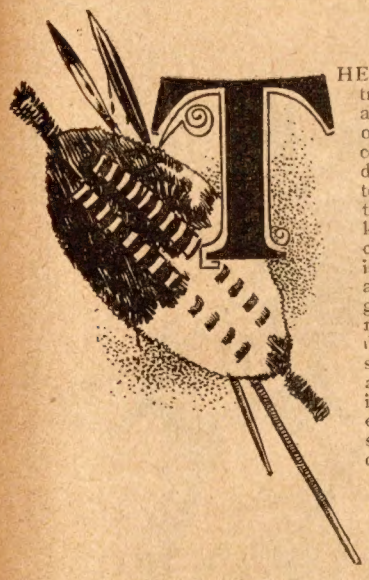
LAWYER: "The coat's too long; the waistcoat's too long; in fact, the entire suit's too long."

Tailor: "Dear me, sir! That's a pity. It's quite my mistake, but I thought that gents of your profession preferred long suits."

A Death of Splendid Heroism.
Noble Sons of the Empire
Butchered by Base Treachery.

The Hope Assassination.

"This land of such dear souls, this dear, dear land,
Dear for her reputation through the world."
—SHAKESPEARE, "King Richard II.," Act II., Sc. 1.



THE incident selected for treatment in this article relates to one of those episodes in colonial history which do everlasting honour to the sterling character of our kith and kin beyond sea. The chip of the old block is rooted, and springs and bourgeons into a glorious sapling, renewing the hope of the permanence of the spirit of British pluck and British patriotism, and assuring us ever and anon, in spite of the timorous clamour of pessimists and national decadents, of the true development and solidification of the empire.

The assassination of Mr. Hamilton Hope and his party, in Pondoland, on October 23, 1880, is one of those terrible tragedies which, while throwing a lurid light upon the strange workings of the native mind, illuminate for a moment, like lightning flashes upon the scene of the tempest, the awful perils which have to be encountered by our colonial brothers, surrounded and outnumbered by powerful and savage tribes, in the faithful discharge of their duty to the empire. It was an act of the basest treachery, perpetrated under the guise of close friendship and hospitality. It was done in open day, in the midst of the savage festivity which the subtle-minded Umhlonlo, acting at the suggestion of Umquikela, the Paramount Chief of the Pondo nation, had prepared to lure his guest, the magistrate of the district, and the representative of the Cape Government, to his doom. Umquikela, who had been secretly inciting the Pondos and the Pondomise to open rebellion against the Government, had instructed their chiefs and indunas to note that the time was fast ripening when a combination for an overt act of sedition could move with every chance of success. In the meantime he suggested that separate acts of aggression should be performed by the various under chiefs. "If you mean to rebel," he said to Umhlonlo, "show me your sincerity by killing your magistrate."

This was the condition of affairs, then, in the Transkei, when, in 1880, war was declared against Basutoland, which, under the scheming sway of Lerothodi, had suddenly broken out into open rebellion. The colonial forces were already in the field in the north-east of Cape Colony, arrayed against Lerothodi; the kafirs across the eastern border, the Fingoes, the Tembus, the Pondomise, and the Pondos, expecting to profit by the occupation of the Government, were in a state of unrest. Hoping to be instrumental in diverting some of the warlike elements of this seething cauldron of malcontency into the channels of loyalty, and animated by a desire to serve his country, Mr. Hamilton Hope, the native magistrate at Qumbu, entered into an arrangement with Umhlonlo to proceed to the attack upon Macquaisberg, in Basutoland, and thus fell a victim to Mr. (now Sir Gordon) Sprigg's "vigorous" native policy. He volunteered to take the field with Umhlonlo and his men in order to check the rebels and to support the loyal Basutos. He went further, even. He agreed to go into Umhlonlo's ground and personally enrol the men selected for service. It was in the performance of this magnificent act of patriotic devotion and service that the cruel and treacherous betrayal and murder of the magistrate by the native chief, who had always acted with seeming friendship, and who, with devilish subtlety and craft, ensnared him to his doom, was enacted. The fiendish cunning and malice of the murder, its infernal treachery, thrilled South Africa with horror.

Hamilton Hope was the son of Colonel Hope, a former Auditor-General at the Cape, and was educated at Bishop's College, Rondebosch, near Capetown. He was for some years in the Civil Service of Cape Colony, and, after experience in commercial business and in farming, received the appointment of magistrates' clerk at Mafeteng, in Basutoland, where, such was his aptitude, he frequently acted as magistrate, and showed such great tact, decision, and ability as led to early promotion. He was first appointed magistrate with Mooirosi, a very difficult post, in which he distinguished himself by his adroit and clever methods of dealing with the natives and their chiefs, his firm but conciliatory attitude, and his strong sense of right and justice. A master of the kafir language, its dialects and variations, he quickly grew to understand the mental forms of the people, the influence of their traditions and family laws, the curious processes of the native mind in its relation to politics and morals; and he took a keen interest in their welfare, promoting their due advantages on every proper occasion with hearty appreciation and kindly sympathy, and acting at all times with that dignified rectitude and impartial justice which the native is quick to recognise as the pre-eminent characteristic of the administration of government by British magistrates. As a result of his sympathetic rule and fair dealing he was greatly esteemed by the natives. His success with Mooirosi led to his selection by the Government for the post of magistrate with Umhlonlo, and here, in all his relations with the Pondomise chief and his people, he continued to distinguish himself; his admirable tact and judgment, his rapid insight and courage, readiness of resource in difficult conjunctures, and his able and skilful treatment of native idiosyncrasies, winning him golden opinions from all sorts of people, and marking him out for a brilliant and honourable career in the service of the colony.

His success with Umhlonlo thus seemed assured, and it was the generally-received opinion that he would triumphantly carry through his cherished project of allaying the spirit of unrest among the native tribes of the Transkei, and successfully conclude his mission to Umhlonlo by marching off that tricky chief and his men to the Basuto War. The Rev. Mr. Key, of St. Augustine's, close to T'Solo, between Qumbu, the seat of the magistracy, and Umhlonlo's Great Place, being questioned on this point, declared emphatically that Mr. Hope always "got on splendidly" with the Pondomise chief, adding, "Indeed, he is one of the few men I know who could manage Umhlonlo. He is very firm, and yet always friendly and kind, and is very much respected. He is undoubtedly the right man in the right place."

Notwithstanding this and similar assurances, grave doubts were expressed on all sides. Although Umhlonlo was a great friend of the missionaries, and freely expressed his admiration for them, there were many whose knowledge of the native character led them to the conclusion that Umhlonlo's partiality for missionaries would not go far towards the security of the brave magistrate's safety. Doubt and suspicion prevailed. The bona fides of the chief, who cordially invited Mr. Hope to his Great Place, was not believed in. Warnings of treachery came from all sides. The Government were uneasy; the chief magistrate of the Transkei had no doubts to solve upon the matter. He urged upon Hope that there was nothing but treachery to be anticipated, and, on his departure, advised the Government by telegraph in these expressive words: "Hope has heroically gone out alone with a treacherous devil."

This message alarmed the Government, who at once communicated its contents to Mr. Hope, who was further informed by the chief magistrate that he was incurring a serious risk and danger to himself.

He was not without misgivings of his own. He knew the terrible risk he was running; he knew the character of the semi-civilised savage with whom he was to deal; his cunning and duplicity, the gleaming smile that masked the

treacherous heart; he knew the suave wiles of the politic native chief, meant to inveigle and ensnare, the placid guile that, tiger-like, pats with a caress the cheek of the victim whose heart he means to lay bare with those sheathed claws. He knew all this—none better—and he knew his probable fate. But he relied, nevertheless, on the friendly relations which had existed between them, and on the chief's keen sense of self-interest. The overawing power of the British Government, he thought, would have a protective influence by its appeal to the chief's shrewd knowledge of affairs. Surely the Power which had conquered and destroyed the potency of Cetewayo, which had decimated and scattered the mighty Zulu nation, and broken the might of Kreli, would overshadow him with its protecting wing! At any rate, the path of duty was clear and open. The possibility of good results from his mission buoyed him up with hope, gave to his courage nerves of steel, and overwhelmed the presentiment of danger. Well, there was duty, and—in success or failure—the service to his country. Danger? Psha! Like a true and whole-hearted patriot, like a brave man, he took his life in his hands, and trusted to the issue.

WARREN WAS KNOCKED DOWN.

Just before starting for Umhlonlo's Great Place, on October 19, he wrote to the Rev. W. S. Davis, at the Wesleyan Mission:

> "I am told that I am being led into a trap, but never had such a direct warning as the enclosed." (He refers, doubtless, to the chief magistrate's telegram.) "Nevertheless, I believe in Umhlonlo's keen sense of his best advantage, and in his ambition to this extent, that he will not kill me; but the risk is there. . . .
>
> "I go strengthened by the feeling that I am doing right, and that the Almighty will guide me, and, if it be His pleasure to take me to Himself, when I shall be at peace. I have done my best to steer a straight and proper course in these matters, and if I fail, and have been deceived, I shall have shown that I backed my opinion."

Despite the absence of any attempt at rhetorical flourish or literary polish, nay, because of their entire simplicity and freedom from any art of the study, these are beautiful and splendid words. Under their plain, sober, simple, balanced sincerity couches the very spirit which animates the noblest and the most inspiring periods of Milton, and which to-day informs with truth and character an Englishman's mental portraits of Hampden and Sidney. Their value is that they denote a valiant and courageous soul, who gives all to his country, who is fully sensible of danger, and—rather likes the risk! And how strong and straight and thorough, how manifestly and characteristically English is that phrase, "I shall have shown that I have backed my opinion"!

It will not surprise us now to find that such a noble and resolute spirit inspired heroism in some kindred bosoms. There were three others who followed him to the death. Mr. Alfred E. Davis, Hope's clerk, volunteered to accompany his chief on his dangerous mission; also Mr. R. E. Warren and Mr. Henman, two young gentlemen from the chief magistrate's office at Umtata. All three were scions of good colonial families; that true grit which makes for righteousness in the empire beyond the confines of Britain. Hope urged upon these young men the danger they were incurring, and advised them to stay at home, declaring he was quite ready to undertake all the danger alone. He could not move them from his side. The true British heart, which neither clime nor change can degenerate, does not quail at the suggestion of danger, and only pulsates with a more joyous vigour at the thought of deeds of "derring do," and the lucky chance which brings along a perilous adventure. They expressed their determination to follow and stand by their brave chief at all hazards.

The magistrate and his devoted adherents, accompanied only by their native servants and waggon-drivers, and a small escort of police, left the Residency at Qumbu on October 20. Mr. A. E. Davis attended his chief as captain and adjutant, Mr. Warren as captain and commissariat officer, while Mr. Henman filled a subordinate post. The party

Life of Charles Peace.

CHAPTER XXXII.—(Continued).

"I HOPE you've not been dull to-day," said Tom, when the two entered the parlour. "I don't like to see you dull."

"I have been as lively as usual," she answered.

"Umph! that's not saying much, darling," returned the husband, in a tone of banter. "Not much, you'll admit. At present the place is new and strange to you. In time you will be more used to it."

"Shall I?" she murmured.

"Why, of course you will."

"Make haste and get rich, Tom dear; then we can have a grand house in London."

His countenance fell as he listened to her. For a long time she had appeared discontented with her lot, and this had been a sore trouble to Gatliffe, who found, as others had found before him, that matrimony was not all smooth sailing.

As yet there had been no storm, but distant rumblings of thunder had been heard.

He drew the beautiful face of his young wife towards him, and kissed it with a fondness which spoke more eloquently than words.

"My dear Aveline," he murmured, "our little house is to me more beautiful than a palace. The reason is plain enough—it contains you."

She looked up into his face and smiled faintly.

"And I am sure you are of the same opinion," he added.

"It is well enough, Tom, but——"

"But what, dear?"

"Oh, nothing; the time will come, let us hope, when we shall own a grand mansion and have all sorts of beautiful things."

The young engineer looked troubled. This was not the first time by many that he had heard her express a similar wish.

"I don't know what to make of her," he muttered to himself. "Of late a change appears to have come over her.

"Look here, Aveline," he said, more solemnly, "mark what I say; I don't think you will be ever happier than you are now. It is not the place—it is not grandeur that ensures happiness—it is a contented mind; that you have."

"Well, I hope I have."

"You ought. I have; your beauty makes my heart glad, your love makes earth heaven to me."

"Mercy on us, what a speech after four years of matrimony! Oh, you dear old fellow," she ejaculated, clapping her hands together, "dear, good old Tom!"

He laughed outright.

"Go on," he exclaimed.

"Well, then, I will. Shall I tell you that I long for this great bright world that you despise?"

"Then I don't, and there's the difference. If we were rich and lived in the great world you speak of so rapturously, you would belong to so many others. Others would delight in your society and follow you with praise, and then I should be jealous. Here, I have you all to myself, which is the very thing I desire."

"Will it be very long before you are rich?" she inquired carelessly.

"My darling, how can I possibly tell, and, after all, what does it matter? How often have I told you that riches do not bring happiness?"

"It may be so, but I should like to try."

She did not perceive how her words jarred upon his sensitive nature. An expression of pain passed over his fine features, and he said no more for some little time. He sat down and ate his evening meal in silence.

"I hope I have not offended you," said his wife.

"I do not believe it possible for you to do so," returned he. "You ask me when I shall be rich. I have two or three inventions—one I was about to work out with Charles Peace."

"Oh, the horrid man! Don't have anything to do with him."

"I don't intend; but he has great ingenuity nevertheless; but let that pass. The inventions I am now endeavouring to bring to perfection may turn out successful. If only one of them does so I shall be a rich man; then, I suppose, you will be satisfied."

"Oh, yes, that would be glorious; but it's not certain, I suppose."

"My dear, nothing is certain in this life," he said quickly. "Positively nothing, except hard work for us all."

For some time after this both husband and wife remained silent. She cleared the supper table, and he lighted his pipe.

She sat herself down by his side. Presently she said:

"Tom, I should dearly like to know who I am."

He started, and glanced quickly at her.

"Who you are? You are my wife."

"Yes, I know; but who my mother was, and my father. It is strange that there should be such a mystery hanging over me."

"What puts that into your head all of a sudden?"

"I don't know, I'm sure. My mother was a lady, and I am, moreover, sure that I am one myself, although I have been brought up in a homely manner. No matter for that—I am a lady myself—you may laugh at me, but I feel like one, or rather how I imagine a lady should feel. I love all things bright and beautiful. I detest everything mean, paltry, and contemptible. You think I am discontented, but this is not so. Nevertheless, I am free to confess that I have tastes which, perhaps, will never be gratified—longings which never can be realised. Is it my fault that a dark mystery hangs over me?"

"Life itself is a mystery," he answered. "The world is full of mysteries. You must not give way to these gloomy thoughts—you must not indeed, dearest."

"No, I will not."

"My darling," said Tom, noting the sad tone in which the reply was made, "whatever induced you to think riches must necessarily bring happiness?"

"I don't know, indeed," replied his wife. "There are times when the monotony of this life seems more than I can bear."

"You would find the same monotony in any sphere of existence. What says the poet:

'Life is as tedious as a twice-told tale
Vexing the dull ear of a drowsy man.'

But there is surely no reason, dearest, why we should endorse the sentiment."

"None whatever, Tom. You are kindness itself," responded his wife, with a loving kiss.

"By the way, I have not as yet told you that a strange gentleman called at the works to-day. He wanted to see Mrs. Maitland upon very pressing business."

"Ah, is that so? Who is he?"

"I haven't the faintest idea. He said his name was Wrench. Do you remember if your mother ever knew a person of that name?"

"Not that I ever heard of. What did you tell him?"

"I gave him her address."

* * * * * * *

Mrs. Maitland resided with her niece, whose house was within half a mile of Tom Gatliffe's residence. While the foregoing conversation had been taking place, the worthy old lady was having a tête-à-tête with the sagacious detective, who had explained to her his reason for waiting upon her.

Mrs. Maitland narrated to him all the circumstances connected with the young girl Aveline, whom she had adopted and brought up as her daughter.

She explained to him how she had fallen into her hands when little more than an infant; explained to him also the accident on the line, how the mother and daughter were

brought into the infirmary at Derby, with the death of the former, together with all those particulars which the reader has read in an earlier portion of this work.

Mr. Wrench was charmed—he was perfectly delighted with the successful nature of his visit, and felt perfectly assured that he was on the right scent.

"And the trinkets—the articles of jewellery, madam," said he, "are you still in possession of them?"

"Oh, yes. Nothing would have induced me to part with them, except to those who require them for the purpose of identification."

"Quite right, madam. I presume you will have no objection to intrust them to my care for a few days? They are quite safe in my hands. It will be needful for Lord Ethalwood to examine them."

"Cannot you do so? I will fetch them at once."

The old lady went upstairs, unlocked an iron safe in which the trinkets were deposited, and returned with them into the parlour.

She placed them before the detective, who examined each article carefully.

"Well, what do you make of them?" inquired his companion.

"There can be no doubt about the matter," said he. "One of the rings bears the motto and crest of the Ethalwoods; and, as far as I can judge at present, this portrait bears a close resemblance to Lord Ethalwood's daughter."

"Then my little protégée, my darling child, is——"

"The grand-daughter of a nobleman."

Mrs. Maitland's breath was almost taken away at this announcement.

"Wonderful!—more than wonderful!" she ejaculated. "And is it possible that she has been left uncared for and unacknowledged all these years?"

Mr. Wrench shrugged his shoulders. "It would appear so," he said, "but there are reasons for this, my dear madam, very strong reasons. I suppose if I give you a receipt for these articles you will permit me to take them to Broxbridge Hall? I pledge you my word of honour that, come what may, they shall be returned to you in the course of a few days."

"Oh, indeed, I cannot do that."

"I swear they shall be returned in a week."

"I don't like to part with them. If they should be lost?"

"They will not be lost. I will answer for that."

"Oh, I dare say you will be careful enough, but still I hardly know how to act in a case of this sort."

"We can do nothing without them. Will you accompany me to Broxbridge Hall, and bring them with you?"

"I am not well enough to bear the fatigue of travelling so far. I have not as yet recovered from a serious illness."

"I leave the matter in your hands. I can get an order in the course of a day or two for you to produce them, but it would be saving a great deal of trouble if you would accede to my request. Yet once for all I must tell you, madam, that Lord Ethalwood counts the hours till I return. He is in the greatest state of anxiety. I have his written authority to act in this matter, the same as himself."

Mr. Wrench pulled from his pocket a document, and Mrs. Maitland put on her spectacles and read it.

"It is altogether a most wonderful affair," said the old lady. "To think that all these years should have gone by without any inquiry being made after my little pet. Still, I suppose I have no right to refuse you; only, you see, I'm loth to part with these articles. Perhaps I had first of all better consult those to whom they in reality belong."

"And who are they?"

"My adopted daughter and her husband."

"I would not presume to dictate, madam, but at the same time you will do wisely, I think, by not mentioning the subject to either the lady or her husband till we know whether she is the person, or rather the daughter of the person, I am seeking. That would be the most prudent course. It would be an act of cruelty to raise hopes, which, after all, might have no foundation in fact."

"That is true," returned Mrs. Maitland. "I will not mention the subject at present to either of them,"

"If you are mistrustful of me," said the detective with a smile, "you can send these articles of jewellery to Scotland Yard."

"I hope you do not imagine, Mr. Wrench, that I am casting any slight on you by my hesitation—far from it. I have every confidence in you. You had better give me an acknowledgment for the receipt of these articles, and take them with you without further delay. Please let me know, at your earliest convenience, the result of your interview with Lord Ethalwood."

"That you may depend upon, madam."

"It is to me most extraordinary how you found me out," said the widow as she was proceeding to pack up the jewellery in its case.

"I doubt if I should—perhaps never—have succeeded in doing so, had I not by the merest chance in the world met with a townsman of yours—a Mr. Peace," returned the detective.

"Mr. Peace!" exclaimed the widow, in a tone of surprise. "Dear me; how very remarkable!"

"Yes, very. He was acquainted with you some four or five years since."

The widow nodded. "Yes, he was," she said sharply. "Mr. Peace, eh? Well, he is the last man in the world I should have thought of."

The jewellery was placed in a morocco case, and handed to Mr. Wrench, who at once wrote out a receipt for the same and took his departure, well satisfied with the result of his visit.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Mr. Wrench was under the full impression that he was a remarkably clever fellow. This fact, however, he had been duly impressed with on very many occasions, but perhaps he was never better pleased with himself than when he left Mrs. Maitland's residence with the proofs of her reputed daughter's identity. He had ascertained from the widow herself that Aveline had a beautiful little boy, who was between two and three years old. This he considered a valuable piece of information, in addition to the facts with which he was already furnished.

Taken altogether, our detective congratulated himself upon being singularly fortunate.

He went by train that same night to Broxbridge Hall, and was rather vexed when the model footman told him that his master was some miles away. Lord Ethalwood was on a visit at the house of a distinguished baronet.

"And his lordship will not return till late to-morrow evening, or it may be the day hafter," said the radiant Henry Adolphus.

Mr. Wrench had no other alternative than to await the return of the earl. It would never do to take the liberty of seeing him at his friend's house.

"He's a bumptious, starchy sort of customer," murmured Mr. Wrench, "and stands a good deal upon etiquette, and all that sort of thing. I must eke out the time as best I can until he returns. Hang it all! what does he want to go away for at this particular time?"

Mr. Wrench made the best of his way to the hostelry kept by Brickett.

It was market day, and there were a number of strangers in the "Lion," in addition to its regular frequenters.

"You are unusually busy it would seem," said he, addressing the landlord, and glancing significantly at the carts and other vehicles in front of the habitation.

"Yes, I have had a regular rush of it all day," returned the landlord, "but I'm glad to see 'ee back, sir, and hope as how ye've brought good news."

"Pretty well for that. Where is Mr. Peace?"

"He be in the parlour, keeping 'em all alive. Shall I call him?"

"No; I'll go in there myself."

Upon entering the public room Mr. Wrench found it three-parts filled with people, most of whom were in some way or other connected with agriculture.

Peace rose from his seat and drew near the detective, who had taken his place in a corner near the door.

It was not Mr. Wrench's usual practice to make persons acquainted with his movements or proceedings, but in this case he felt that Peace had a perfect right to know, and he therefore narrated to him the successful nature of his expectations.

This, perhaps, was not altogether a prudent thing to do in a public-room, even though the conversation between the two was carried on in a tone which was but a little beyond a whisper.

But our detective was under the full impression that there were none present who even comprehended their discourse, and certainly none who were in any way interested in the same.

But even detectives, with all their caution, are sometimes at fault.

Charles Peace was perfectly astounded when he became aware of the facts detailed to him by the detective.

He had never heard of the jewellery taken from the dead

body of the lady in the infirmary—had never for a moment imagined that there was any doubt about the paternity of Aveline, whom he implicity believed to be the daughter of Mrs. Maitland.

He was almost bewildered by the discovery made by the officer, who gave the details in a matter-of-fact sort of way, which left no doubt as to their accuracy.

Mr. Wrench remained in the public room for some time drinking with Peace, to whom he stood divers and sundry potations. After this he whispered to our hero that he was about to retire, wished him good night, and betook himself to his bedchamber.

Peace did not leave the parlour for an hour or two after the withdrawal of his companion.

He played several pieces on his violin, much to the delight of the assembled guests, and then in his turn retired to his room.

He was, however, too restless and fidgety to seek repose.

"I can't make this out. 'Somebody's in the house who is no good.' Curse it, I wish the writer had been a little more explicit; this is most incomprehensible. Who is in the house, I wonder, that means no good? Some robber, I suppose—some suspected person. Well, I'll have my revolver handy in case of any attack; but after all it may only be a grim joke of one of my parlour acquaintances."

He tried to persuade himself that this last hypothesis was the correct one, but signally failed in doing so.

Peace was not a man to give way to idle or groundless fears.

Nevertheless, he could not but acknowledge that the circumstance was singular, and, taken altogether, was of an exceptional character.

During his sojourn at the Carved Lion he had made it a practice to have his dog Gip sleep in the same room as himself, and he had not departed from that rule on the present occasion.

"WHO ARE YOU? SPEAK, WOMAN!" SHOUTED PEACE.

He sat himself on the edge of his bed and thought over all the strange incidents which had come to his knowledge in respect to Aveline.

While thus ruminating he was startled by a noise as of something heavy thrown against the window of his little room.

He arose suddenly and threw open the casement.

Something was flung into the window. It fell upon the floor.

Peace picked it up. It was a small pebble, around which was a piece of note paper.

"What's the meaning of this?" exclaimed our hero, peering curiously out of the window.

No one was to be seen.

He sat down again and unfolded the paper, spread it out on his knee, and saw written thereon these words:

"Be cautious. Keep watch and ward. Somebody's in the house, a stranger, who is of no good. Take warning!—

"A FRIEND."

He had with him also a six-chambered revolver, which he had not come too honestly by. He had, in fact, stolen it when in Sheffield.

He glanced at Gip, who was lying on a rug placed for his accommodation near the door of his room.

The animal looked wistfully at his master.

"Well," murmured our hero; "no one will be able to enter the apartment without my hearing it, for Gip would be sure to give an alarm. At the same time it would be as well perhaps to take this precaution."

He walked towards the door and slid the bolt into its socket.

Then he sat once more on the side of his bed.

He remained for an hour or so after this, watching and waiting, but could not detect the faintest sound. He got fairly worn out, and threw himself on his couch without undressing, drew the rug over him, and sank to sleep.

How long he had remained thus he could not say, but he was awoke by a low moan or whine from Gip, who, upon discovering his master awakening, wagged his tail and came

to the side of the bed; then he crept towards the door and sniffed at its base.

"Something's amiss," whispered our hero. "The sagacious brute hears or noses somebody—that's quite certain."

He crept softly to the door, against which he placed his ear.

He heard the sounds of soft footsteps on the outside, but they were so faint as to be hardly audible.

With revolver in hand he awaited the issue.

The dog in the meantime was in an evident state of anxiety.

Peace, before stretching himself on his bed, had taken the precaution to place his lighted chamber candle in the fireplace, which effectively prevented its feeble rays penetrating into the passage on the outside.

"Somebody or something is stirring," he muttered. "I can't stand this state of suspense any longer—so here goes."

He slid the bolt back as noiselessly as possible, and flung open the door.

A flood of moonlight streamed in from the window on the landing.

Beyond this was a wide oak staircase, and ascending this he beheld a strange-looking figure, clad in a long, steel-coloured cloak.

To all appearance the figure was that of a woman.

But Peace had never remembered to have seen any such person in the hostelry since he had dwelt there.

"Hulloa there! Who are you? Speak, woman!" shouted out Peace.

No answer was vouchsafed to this.

"If you don't speak and say who you are, I'll fire. I've a loaded pistol in my hand. Do you hear? For the last time I say speak, if it only be to save your life."

The figure turned the angle of the stairs, but made no answer.

A buxom servant wench opened the door of her bedroom, and exclaimed:

"Mother Brickett's ghost!"

She then uttered a series of piercing screams, and rushed back into her room in a state of abject terror.

Peace made for the bottom of the stairs, and fired one chamber of his revolver.

He did not aim at the receding figure, his object being only to frighten.

In this he succeeded, as far as the inmates were concerned.

Mr. Wrench came out in his night shirt, pale as a parsnip. Brickett made his appearance in the passage, and exclaimed, in a loud voice:

"For mercy's sake, tell me what's the matter! Are there robbers in the house, or what?"

"It be missus's ghost, that's what it be!" exclaimed the servant girl, from her bedroom. "Ah, woe is me that I should live to see such a dreadful sight!"

"You little fool," cried Peace, "hold your cursed tongue, will you? Ghost, indeed!—more like a robber."

"I've lost the jewels; they've been stolen!" said the detective. "Lost them! Don't let anyone leave the house."

He returned to his bedroom, slipped on his trousers and boots. Meanwhile, Peace turned to Brickett, and said:

"Who's in the house besides ourselves? Any stranger?"

"Yes, one."

"Which is his room?"

"No. 9, on the next floor," said the landlord, who had never been so puzzled and alarmed in his life.

Peace rushed back into his bedroom, snatched up the chamber candlestick, and flew up the wide staircase, never pausing till he had reached the upper floor. The door of the No. 9 bedroom was wide open.

Our hero entered the apartment, which was tenantless. He rushed into each of the other rooms on the same floor.

One was occupied by the little maid who acted as supplementary waitress—another was tenanted by an old woman, and another was where the potman slept. All the occupants were scared at beholding our hero with his revolver in one hand and his chamber candlestick in the other.

In answer to his queries they one and all declared they had neither seen nor heard anybody about since they had retired to rest, with the exception of their interlocutor.

At the farther end of the passage was a double window, which opened sideways on hinges, as is often the case in old English houses and inns. One of the casements of this was partially open.

Peace's suspicions were aroused at once. He ran to the window, threw it back, and looked out. At the farther extremity of the roof he beheld the figure of a man who flung himself off the roof on to one of the branches of a large chestnut tree, by means of which he reached the ground in safety.

"He's got clean off, and done it very cleverly, I am free to confess," exclaimed Peace; "but we may yet hunt him down."

Mr. Wrench, in a state of trepidation, now made his appearance.

"Have you discovered anything?" he ejaculated, in a tone of the deepest anxiety.

"He's off!" cried Peace.

"Who?"

"How should I know? The robber, whoever he may be. But not a moment is to be lost. Follow me."

Our hero descended the stairs with the speed of an antelope, and was followed by the detective. They both made for the front door, which, unfortunately for them, was locked and barred most securely.

"How shall we get out of this cursed house?" cried Wrench.

"Here, Brickett! Brickett!" shouted out Peace. "Bring the keys and open the front door!"

The landlord hastened to the spot and undid the fastenings. Then Peace, without another word, sallied forth.

It is an old saying, "set a thief to catch a thief," and it was never more exemplified than in this instance.

He ran out into the high road, and saw at about a hundred and fifty yards the figure of the same man he had seen on the roof.

"He's got a good start, it's true," he observed to the detective, "but here goes," and with these words Peace ran after the fugitive at the very top of his speed.

He was followed by Mr. Wrench, who, as a matter of course, ran his hardest.

They had the satisfaction of finding that they gained upon the robber, who had, unfortunately for him, injured one of his ankles in dropping from the tree.

Had this not been the case the chances would have been all in his favour.

Peace and Mr. Wrench found they were gaining rapidly on the robber. This acted as an incentive for them to put forth their energies to the fullest extent.

Beyond the fields which the fugitive was now traversing was a narrow stream—a small river. This, although possibly he did not know at the time, would form a barrier to his progress.

Peace ran better, perhaps, than he had ever done in his life, and this is saying a great deal. He was far ahead of the detective, who was by this time winded, and was within from twenty to five-and-twenty paces of the robber, who had now come close to the river.

His capture seemed inevitable; but, being well-nigh driven to desperation, he made a flying leap, and plunged into the stream just as Peace had made sure of seizing him.

The thief was evidently an expert swimmer. He struck out and made for the opposite shore.

"Curse him, he'll get clear off after all!" shrieked out the detective in an agony of despair. "Can you swim?"

"No, I can't, and I don't intend to try," returned Peace. "Can you?"

"A little, but not well enough to venture with my clothes on in a running stream like this."

"Then wait till he reaches the opposite bank!" cried our hero, levelling his pistol.

The robber now got into shallow water, through which he waded as quick as possible.

Peace fired and wounded the fugitive, who staggered, but had sufficient strength left to run behind a large granary in the opposite meadow, which sheltered him from any further discharge from the revolver.

"He's wounded and wet to the skin. He can't run far. I'll after him," exclaimed our hero, who made for a small wooden bridge, situated at about sixty or seventy yards from where he stood. He reached the bridge in the space of a minute or two, passed over it, and gained the field beyond. He then ran towards the granary.

All this had been done so rapidly that Mr. Wrench did not very well know what his more active companion was endeavouring to compass. The wooden bridge was concealed by a dense mass of foliage, and Mr. Wrench did not know of its existence. He was therefore greatly surprised at seeing Peace run rapidly across the opposite meadow, and stood watching his movements with the deepest anxiety.

The robber was equally surprised at beholding Peace. Seeing his danger, he once more took to his heels.

"If you don't stop I'll shoot you down like a dog!" shouted out his pursuer in a voice of thunder. "You can't escape. Yield, and save your life while you have a chance."

"I know that voice!" cried the man. "Don't fire, old fellow! I'm cornered, and give in!"

Peace rushed forward and collared the speaker.

"Don't you know me?" said the man.

"Why, hang me if it isn't the gipsy!"

"That's right enough; it is the gipsy, who's nearly done over. What with water and fire, I've had my dose. But, I say, old fellow, you ain't a-goin' to hand me over to the 'crushers'? You don't want to see a fellow lagged? Look here, this is all I've taken—it is, as I'm a sinner. There it is; I give it up. Let me go!"

Peace took the case of jewels from the gipsy. He opened it, and saw that the articles corresponded with the description given by the detective.

"I don't want you to be quodded," said he, "but I shall just have a search before I let you go."

The fugitive turned his pockets inside out, and convinced our hero that for once he had spoken the truth.

"No more burglary bis'ness for me!" cried the gipsy. "I ain't good at it. One pill's a dose."

"What made you attempt this one?"

"Well, if yer must know, I was put up to it by a swell. Ah! you've sent a bullet into my leg and maimed me for life, perhaps, and a-stopped me a-getting a couple of 'undred quid—that's what you've been and done. But you'll let me go?"

"I don't know how you are to get clean off. I expect the officer here every minute."

"I've got a fast-trotting prad not fifty yards hence If I've strength enough left, which I think I have, to mount him, the devil himself won't catch me when once on his back."

"Go your way, then; I will return," cried our hero, as he thrust into his coat-pocket the much-treasured jewel-case, and made again for the wooden bridge.

He passed over this, when he was met by Brickett and the detective.

"Well," said the latter, "he's got clean off, then, after all?"

"What matters that?" whispered Peace to the officer. "This is all you want, isn't it?" and he handed the case and its contents to Wrench, who could not conceal his delight.

"I am greatly indebted to you. Accept my most heartfelt thanks," murmured the detective. "You have indeed afforded me most timely assistance."

"Keep dark for the present!" whispered Peace. "We can discuss this subject at our leisure. For the present, let it be known only to ourselves."

The detective nodded and bent his steps in the direction of the Carved Lion.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

Mr. Wrench and his two companions returned to the inn, all the occupants of which were in a state of alarm. They had no definite notion of the actual cause of the commotion any further than that some stranger had been creeping mysteriously through the apartments of the old hostelry, for what purpose they were at a loss to divine. The servant-girl declared most positively that Mrs. Brickett's ghost had paid a visit to the establishment on that eventful night. She was most positive in her declaration as to this fact, for she saw her with her own eyes, and nothing in the world should persuade her to the contrary.

Mr. Wrench and Peace did not contradict this statement; on the contrary, they affected to believe it, albeit they were well aware that it was without a shadow of foundation in fact.

None of the occupants of the inn, however, could conceal from themselves that some secret and mysterious agency had been at work.

Brickett was puzzled—in fact, he was in a state of fog, and could not see his way at all clearly.

He said, in answer to the detective's queries, that a dark-looking man, who was to all appearance a gipsy, had presented himself at the house just before closing-time, and inquired if he could have a bed for a night or two.

The landlord answered in the affirmative, and the stranger, after partaking of some refreshment, retired to the room, No. 9, on the upper floor of the house.

This was all the landlord knew of his customer. He seemed, so Brickett declared, to be a quiet, respectable sort of man enough.

Mr. Wrench did not offer any observations when this information was given, but he had his suspicions nevertheless.

The whole household had been so disturbed that there was but little rest for them during the remainder of the night.

The detective and our hero met in the morning in the club-room, where they had their morning meal together.

"This has been a planned thing," said Mr. Wrench to his companion; "that rascal would not have entered my room, opened the door of the bureau in which the case was deposited, and stolen the same had he not been fully aware of both its importance and value. I do much regret that he was not captured."

"I think you will act wisely in keeping the affair as quiet as possible," returned Peace. "What possible good could accrue from his being brought to justice? Answer me that. None at all. It would have only been a needless and unnecessary exposure, at which the earl would have been greatly mortified."

"There is some reason in that."

"Very great reason, I should say. You cannot for a moment suppose that his lordship would like his private affairs dragged before any court of law for the sake of a public prosecution. Rest assured, my friend, that we have acted wisely in letting the rascal go about his business. In any case, even assuming he had been convicted, blame would attach itself to you."

"So it would; I admit that. You take a very sensible view of the matter. Let the matter blow over, and say as little about it as possible," returned Mr. Wrench, with sudden warmth. "You have shown great wisdom throughout, and I have once more to return you my most sincere thanks."

"Oh, there's no need for that," replied Peace carelessly. "For the present I must bid you good-day, for I have business matters to attend to," said Peace, rising from his seat and making towards the door of the club-room.

"Good day for the present," returned the detective; and so the two parted.

In a few minutes after this Henry Adolphus, his lordship's footman, presented himself, and informed the detective that the earl and Mr. Chicknell were awaiting his appearance at the Hall.

Mr. Wrench lost no time in paying his respects to his two employers. He made them acquainted with the successful nature of his expedition to Wood Green, his interview with Mrs. Maitland, and wound up by producing the trinkets which had been so miraculously rescued from the clutches of "Bandy-legged Bill," the gipsy.

Lord Ethalwood snatched the case and its contents from the officer. He examined the trinkets, and as he did so a bright flush overspread his features.

"The very image of the long-lost Aveline!" he exclaimed, directing the lawyer's attention to the portrait of his daughter. "There can be no doubt as to the identity." Then, turning to the detective, he said, "You have displayed wonderful ability, sir, in the conduct of this case, and deserve my warmest commendation."

Mr. Wrench bowed, but did not offer any observation. Possibly he was mindful of the old adage, "That a modest man on his own merits is dumb."

"We" (he spoke in the plural) "have brought the matter to a satisfactory conclusion," observed the lawyer.

"As yet it is not concluded, Mr. Chicknell," returned the earl.

"No—ahem!—of course not. Much remains to be done. Your lordship is quite right. It is not concluded, but it is gratifying to know that we have been successful thus far. The ring bears the Ethalwood crest, I believe?"

"It does."

"An additional link—I may say an important one—in the chain of evidence."

"I am told," said the earl, addressing the officer, "that some robber, some unprincipled scoundrel, made an attempt to steal these articles from the inn, either last night or early this morning?"

"That is true, my lord, but we were too sharp for him," said Mr. Wrench, with evident vexation—"much too sharp."

"Oh, it would be adding to the other favours already conferred upon me if you could by any means ascertain who the villain was."

"I will do my best," returned Wrench.

"Thank you!"

"Well, I think that is all we have to say at present, Wrench," said Mr. Chicknell. "I will see you later on."

The detective took the hint, bowed, and retired.

"Confound it!" he murmured, as he descended the stairs. "Who could have told him of the attempted robbery? 'Ill news travels fast' is an old saying, which is borne out in this instance."

For the remainder of the day Peace was actively employed

in an endeavour to find out the man who had created such a disturbance at the Carved Lion on the preceding evening; but, as he had anticipated, he found this by no means an easy task.

The gipsy had got clear off. There were traces of his passage along the high road by the marks of blood which had poured from his wounds, but they gradually became fainter, after which they were no longer distinguishable.

Wrench had proved himself to be a proficient in that department of his profession known as "thief catching," but he was by no means sanguine of success in this case. Neither did he care much about it, for he argued that no possible good could accrue by the arrest of the gipsy; certainly, none as far as he (the detective) was concerned. In point of fact, it would be a needless exposure of his own want of caution.

CHAPTER XXXV.

"We have been singularly successful, my lord," said Mr. Chicknell, after the detective had taken his departure. "We have not succeeded in finding your beloved daughter, but we have found your grandchild, who is beautiful, and who is, moreover, the image of her mother."

"How do you know? You have not seen her," observed the earl.

"That I admit, but Wrench has, and we can take his word."

"What does Mr. Wrench say about her husband?"

"He says he is a fine, handsome fellow. Not of high birth, it is true; but he is a superior man of his class."

"And what might that be?"

"He is an engineer."

"Does his wife seem warmly attached to him?"

The lawyer smiled.

"I am a better judge, my lord, of the merits of a law case than of a lady's affection," he returned; "but from what I am given to understand, the union between the two was what is termed a love match."

"Bah! a love match!" exclaimed the earl, with something like disgust. "A love match, indeed!"

A silence of some minutes' duration succeeded this last speech.

The earl glanced at a portrait of one of his ancestors which hung on the wall of his room.

He sighed, and said sadly:

"It would seem that the Ethalwoods have fallen very low during my lifetime; their name is sullied, their honour tarnished. But I am not unmindful of the respect due to myself and my ancestors. I cannot and will not receive the husband of my grandchild in this house. A man of that kind is not fit companion for me or mine."

"I am sorry for this," murmured the lawyer, "very sorry, but I suppose it cannot be helped. What do you propose, then, my lord?"

"At present it is not easy to determine upon my course of action, but I am resolved upon one point. Nothing whatever shall induce me to recognise this miserable mechanic. But I will adopt my granddaughter, I will make her a wealthy heiress—she shall have the large fortune which I purposed dividing between my two sons, and I will also adopt her son. He shall be my heir, but this must be conditional."

"And what is that?"

"She must live apart from her husband. There must be a separation—a legal one if it can be compassed. If not, they must part by mutual consent."

Mr. Chicknell made no reply.

"Do you understand what I have been saying?" asked the earl testily.

"Oh, yes, my lord, I comprehend most fully, but I cannot conceal from myself that there may be some difficulty in carrying out your views."

"None whatever. I can see no difficulty."

The lawyer shrugged his shoulders, but made no answer.

"Really Chicknell," observed the earl, "you seem to be offering imaginary impediments. You must look at this matter from my point of view, not from your own. I suppose you know enough of me—you ought to do so by this time—to be perfectly aware that I am not a man to be dictated to?"

"I would not presume to dictate to you," observed the lawyer.

"Pardon me, Chicknell, I have been somewhat hasty. What I said was without due consideration, so let it pass; but you must do your best for me. Of course I have no desire to place the affair in any other hands than yours."

"If you have been hasty, I acknowledge frankly that I have been mistaken."

"In what?"

"I thought your delight would have been so great at our success that you would have for the nonce sunk all considerations as to social distinction. I find I am mistaken."

Lord Ethalwood looked at the speaker in some surprise, but his countenance did not, however, wear an angry expression.

"I have my views, which it would appear are not identical with your own. I will receive my grandchild Aveline and her son, but I will not countenance her husband."

"It is my bounden duty to act according to the instructions received from your lordship," said the lawyer. "Tell me what you wish me to do."

"You had better hasten at once to Wood Green, and let my granddaughter know who she is. I should like you to bring her and her son back with you, if this be possible. I will, in the meantime, consider over the proposition we will make to her."

"I will act in accordance with your instructions."

"But you do not like the commission?" said the earl quickly. "You need not reply, Chicknell; I see you do not. There is another little matter, Mr. Chicknell. We have to attend to this picture-frame maker, Mr. Peace. He has been of essential service to us, and certainly deserves some recompense."

"Certainly; that was understood."

"What do you propose?"

"He's a poor man. Fifty pounds would be deemed a liberal recompense."

"I will get you to take him a cheque for a hundred."

"Ah, that will be ample—more than sufficient."

"You will see what he says—how he receives it."

The lawyer nodded. The earl drew the cheque, and handed it to Chicknell.

"You wish me to present him with it before I leave?"

"Certainly; do so at once."

Mr. Chicknell remained at Broxbridge Hall till the following morning after the foregoing conversation. He sallied forth, and bent his steps in the direction of Peace's workshop.

The frame-maker was hard at work. A few brief words sufficed to explain the reason of his visit.

He handed the earl's cheque to our hero, who accepted it, and at the same time expressed his sense of gratitude, and said it was much more than he had any right to expect.

This little bit of business having turned out perfectly satisfactory, Mr. Chicknell took the train up to London, and from thence proceeded to Wood Green.

Upon his arrival at Gatliffe's residence, he discovered the young wife in the garden, which ran at one side and in the rear of the house.

Mr. Chicknell raised his hat in a most courtly manner as Aveline advanced towards the gate at which he was standing.

"Mrs. Gatliffe, I presume?" said the lawyer.

The lady answered in the affirmative, and unlocked the gate.

"I am a stranger to you, madam," he observed, apologetically; "but the business I am engaged in makes it a matter of necessity that we should confer together."

"Do you wish to see me or my husband? If the latter, he is not within, and will not return home till the evening."

"It's you I desire to communicate with, not your husband."

Mrs. Gatliffe looked surprised, but did not make any reply.

She opened a side door, and conducted her visitor into the front parlour.

He entered the parlour and was handed a chair by the mistress of the establishment.

"You will, perhaps, be no wiser," said Mr. Chicknell, with a smile, "when I inform you that I am solicitor to Lord Ethalwood, seeing that in all probability even the name of his lordship may be unknown to you."

"It is."

"Well, madam, it must remain so no longer, as it is requisite that you should know who you are."

A bright flush overspread the beautiful features of Aveline Gatliffe.

"Who I am!" she murmured. "Indeed—indeed, sir, I have yearned to know this for very many years past."

"I am not surprised at that, madam. Let me at once inform you that you belong to the aristocracy of this country."

"Oh, sir, are you serious? Can this be possible?" inquired Aveline, in a state of deepest anxiety.

"I am dealing with facts which are incontrovertible," said the lawyer, in a more serious tone. "Listen, madam."

Slowly, deliberately, and with singular clearness, Mr. Chicknell proceeded to make his companion acquainted with all those circumstances connected with his case, as he termed it.

He passed lightly over the elopement of Aveline's mother with the Italian; neither did he dwell upon the painful scene in the infirmary after the accident on the line, but he gave her to understand that the articles of jewellery taken from the dead body of her parent were in the possession of Lord Ethalwood. Mr. Chicknell made the young wife acquainted with every grain of evidence, which, taken altogether, proved most incontestably her identity.

As Aveline listened, her wonder-struck countenance lost much of its wonted colour; her lips grew white as lilies, and her eyes dilated with an expression which was something akin to terror.

He finished his narrative, the last words of which were of serious import.

A mist seemed to float before her eyes.

"I am not so sure of that," said Mr. Chicknell. "Lord Ethalwood is a very proud man—I should say no man living is prouder. He has the greatest reverence for what he calls the honour of his house. Think how he valued it when he treated his daughter as one dead because she married beneath her. I will be explicit and plain-spoken—the exigencies of the case necessitate my being so. Lord Ethalwood will receive you as his grandchild; will give you a large fortune; will make your son his heir—all, upon one condition."

"And what is that?"

"That you will leave your husband, whom he considers low-born, and promise never to see him again."

Aveline uttered an expression as of sudden pain.

"These are indeed hard terms, sir," she exclaimed. "It might be said cruel proposals."

"They are what I have been instructed to make to you," returned the lawyer with a shrug.

"Leave my husband, who is the best and kindest that ever woman had! I would not do it for any consideration. He

"I WOULD NOT DO IT FOR ANY CONSIDERATION."

"Am I really that great lord's grandchild?" she gasped forth, with evident effort.

"You are so beyond all question," returned the lawyer. "You are undoubtedly the daughter of Aveline Beatrice Ethalwood, who ran away from home with her music master. You are the grandchild of Lord Ethalwood, the master of Broxbridge and its rich dependencies. The child playing there (pointing through the window of the apartment to the little boy on the grass plot) may be one day an earl, and you yourself may be a wealthy heiress; but I regret to say that there is one condition attached to all this."

"A condition!" she replied, her face recovering its colour, her eyes flashing light. "I am bound to accept the condition, I suppose? You do not know how I have always longed to be rich and great."

The lawyer smiled.

"It is not for me to dictate. I have only to make the proposition, which it will rest with you to either accept or refuse."

She looked surprised, and said:

"There will be no condition too difficult for me to accept."

loves me, and I will not consent to break an honest man's heart."

"I expected this answer," said Mr. Chicknell, "and it therefore does not surprise me; but if I might suggest, madam, it would be that you take time to consider the matter. This is but just and reasonable."

"You have no right to tempt me thus by making such an offer," she exclaimed in an angry tone.

"I have simply done my duty," he answered, "by acting in accordance with the instructions received from my client."

"Tell this proud nobleman that I will never give my consent to such a course of action."

She looked so lovely in her pride, her anger, and her tears that the lawyer wished his client could have seen her at that moment.

He waited patiently till her indignation had in a measure passed over; then he said:

"There will be no harm in your seeing his lordship," he said. "On the contrary, it might have considerable weight with him, and turn him from his obstinate resolution. He

requested me to say that he would be overjoyed to see you and your little boy at Broxbridge Hall."

"Did he?"

"Yes. He said I was not to leave until you had consented to accompany me."

"I will see him, then. I accept his invitation, but I cannot leave without first of all consulting my husband."

"Who, in all probability, will not give his consent."

"He will not refuse if I tell him I have given my word."

Mr. Chicknell inquired of his companion when she would have her husband's answer.

"I will speak to him on the subject when he comes home this evening."

"And if he consents you will accompany me to Broxbridge to-morrow?"

Aveline replied in the affirmative.

The lawyer took his departure, with a promise to see her again on the following morning.

Tom Gatliffe, when he returned home that evening, was perfectly bewildered when he had been made acquainted with all the circumstances connected with his young wife. A foreboding of evil took possession of him; he was forcibly and painfully impressed with the fact that the discovery was not unattended with danger. He could, however, refuse his wife nothing, and therefore gave his consent for her to accompany the lawyer to Broxbridge Hall.

On the following morning Mr. Chicknell presented himself. Aveline and her child were arrayed in their best attire, and left their cottage in Wood Green under the protection of the man of law.

A telegram had been sent to Broxbridge advising its owner of the visit. An open landau awaited them upon their arrival at the station. In this Mr. Chicknell and his two companions were driven to the hall.

As they approached the fine old mansion Peace passed the carriage. His eyes were riveted on the face of its female occupant, Aveline; he thought she looked more lovely than ever.

It was the first time he had seen her since the rejection of his suit in the garden of Mrs. Maitland's house.

A host of contending emotions rushed through his brain as he witnessed the arrival of the carriage at the great gates of the hall.

"She does not condescend to honour me with a passing notice," he ejaculated in a voice of concentrated passion. "The stuck-up, proud minx, and but for me she would never have been discovered. Curses on it! I was a fool to give any information—worse than a fool. Much thanks shall I get from either her or her bumptious husband."

He turned out of the high road and made for his workshop, but he was ill at ease. All the worst passions of his nature were in the ascendant, and he did not care about following his usual avocation.

For a long time he remained moody and thoughtful in his workshop. He was laying plans for the future.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

While all these events had been taking place, Charles Peace had paid frequent visits to the house and gardens in possession of the girl "Nelly," for whom he had conceived a passionate fondness. He had become on tolerably familiar terms with her aunt, and had on more than one occasion flirted with her niece. Nelly did not dislike him, and, although she did not encourage his attentions, she did not positively reject them. To a certain extent she felt flattered by the court and homage paid to her. Her conduct, as far as our hero was concerned, was nothing more nor less than a bit of harmless coquetry.

With Peace it was far different. He hoped to win the girl; otherwise he would not have troubled himself so much about her, and it is likely enough that he would not have remained so long in the neighbourhood had it not been for her.

After the robbery at the "Lion" and the chase of Bandy-legged Bill, Peace endeavoured to ascertain who threw the missile into his window on that eventful night.

He taxed several of the villagers with it, but they one and all denied in a most positive manner having given the timely warning.

It afterwards occurred to him that it might be Nelly, and he mentioned his suspicions to her.

She laughed, and after a little hesitation acknowledged that she was the culprit. She informed Peace that she was mistrustful of the gipsy, whom she had seen in her aunt's strawberry-ground with a strange gentleman, with whom he was conversing in almost a whisper. From the few words of the conversation that did reach her ears she was under the impression that a deep-laid plot was hatching; and afterwards, upon finding the gipsy had taken up his quarters at the Carved Lion, her suspicions were in a measure confirmed, hence it was that she had recourse to the little stratagem which was of such infinite service on the night of the attempted robbery.

"You are a good girl, and are worth your weight in gold," cried Peace when Nelly had concluded. "Indeed, I don't know what I should do without you."

He placed his arm round her neck, and drew her towards him.

"There, get away, do!" exclaimed the girl, slipping out of his grasp. "I never knew a man so forward and impudent as you are."

"And I never knew a girl so uncertain and capricious as you are," returned he; "so now we are even. But, I say, Nell darling——" he was about to make an amorous speech, when the voice of the owner of the establishment was heard, and Nell said quickly:

"There's aunt calling me; I must go indoors."

"But I want to speak to you; have something to say of the greatest importance."

"Some other time will do as well," she returned with a laugh.

"Will you meet me to-morrow evening at the corner of Dennett's Lane, and hear what I have to say?"

"Perhaps."

"Nay, don't say perhaps; you must come."

"Very well; I will, if possible," and with these words the girl ran down the gravel walk and entered the house.

It was in the evening of the day on which Aveline Gatliffe had paid a visit to the earl that Nelly had promised to be at the end of Dennett's Lane.

Peace anxiously awaited her appearance.

"You're precious late, my lady," said he when she approached.

"Be I? Well, I couldn't get away before. It beant no fault of mine if I be late. Now, then, what be ye a-going to tell me?"

"You shall learn all in good time," cried he, putting her arm in his and strolling along the narrow footway.

"You see, Nell, it's time, I'm thinking, that I should be plain spoken. I find, my lass, that I care a deal more for you than I first imagined. You see, I don't know how much longer I shall remain in this village—not long, I expect. The fact is, I've grown so fond of you that I don't like to leave—nay, more, I don't intend to leave until you give me an answer one way or the other."

"An answer! What about?"

"What do you suppose it's about? Can't you guess?"

"No."

"Well, I'm sorry for you. Don't I tell you that I'm attached to you—that I love you?"

He drew her towards him and covered her lips and face with burning and passionate kisses.

She was surprised and annoyed, made as much resistance as possible, and pushed him from her.

"What possesses the man?" she cried, "to be mawling a gal in this fashion? If I'd ha' known of this I wouldn't ha' come."

"Now, Nell," cried her companion, "why do you seek to tantalise me? You must know by this time my feelings with regard to yourself. Listen to me for a few moments. You know I've been doing a good stroke of business; I am greatly respected by all who know me. In addition to this, I have been patronised and made much of by the Master of Broxbridge——"

"What has all this to do with me?"

"I am telling you these things to prove that I am worthy of you. I am well-to-do, and have every reason to suppose you care something about me."

She laughed derisively at this last observation.

His countenance grew dark and wore a malignant expression, but by a violent effort he suppressed his passion.

"What be that you want me to promise?"

"Not to have anything to say to any other chap when I am gone. You must consider yourself engaged to me."

"I ain't a-goin' to mek any promise."

"Why not?"

"I don't know enough of you," she answered with the greatest simplicity; "that's one reason."

"And the other?" he shouted in a voice of thunder. "There is someone else in the case—is that it?"

"I won't answer you."

(To be continued.)

had in their charge two buck-waggons, containing the commissariat stores for the promised native contingent, two Scotch carts, 51 stands of arms, and 700 rounds of ammunition. They halted the next morning at Sulenkama, about eighteen miles from Qumbu, the place appointed by Umhlonlo for the purpose of enrolling the men who were to serve in his regiment. Here, on a small acclivity, they pitched their camp. The chief visited them in the evening, and raised their spirits considerably by his friendly attitude; he expressed his gratification at meeting the magistrate, spoke hopefully of the prospects of their joint undertaking in the field against Macquai, and allayed all doubts by the cordiality of his bearing and the apparent sincerity of his greeting. His people, he assured them, fully entered into the spirit with which he approved the expedition, and were anxious to join them. There would be no difficulty in raising and enrolling the contingent. It was all cut and dried; no obstacles would be raised by his people; the way had been made clear and smooth for the magistrate. He left them all smiles, promising to return on the morrow with his army.

After his departure the shadow of doubt returned. The magistrate was depressed. Was Umhlonlo to be trusted? On reflection, there was something strange about the chief's

Taking out his stabbing assegai.

method. Why had he come on a preliminary visit? To ascertain the strength of the camp? His cordiality seemed real, but he well knew the histrionic power of the clever men of the kafir race. They murder with parted lips, disclosing gleaming teeth and eyes scintillating with hidden fires of suppressed laughter; no actor in the European theatre can excel them in the art of personal deception, in the artful artlessness with which they can assume a cordial bearing as the mask of hollow treachery.

About 11 o'clock on this morning (October 22), Umhlonlo, having collected about 400 of his armed warriors, called his people together, and they came to the camp to discuss the prospects of the expedition with the magistrate and his party. Mr. Hope addressed the assembly, explaining the object of the meeting, and stated that, as Umhlonlo had offered to provide a contingent, those who were willing to join would be duly enrolled and would receive the pay usual for such services. At the request of the chief, who said that his army had not all collected, the meeting was postponed until the following day, and the people were dismissed.

Umhlonlo, with four of his principal indunas, remained at the camp, where they partook of dinner with their intended victims, and were very affable and talkative, asking many questions about the route to be taken for the attack on Macquai. There was no jarring note during the evening; nothing to indicate treachery. That night Umhlonlo and his four followers slept under the ammunition carts.

About eight o'clock next morning—the fatal October 23, 1880—between 800 and 900 men, armed with assegais, appeared in the vicinity of the camp. An hour later, at the command of the chief, the young men of the tribe started a dance; the old men remained sitting to watch them. This is an exhibition often made for the entertainment of European officers in camp, and invariably indulged in, for their own behoof, by natives on the war-path. It was being performed now presumably as a compliment to the magistrate and his party, and excited no surprise. They looked on from their raised position, almost unarmed.

While the evolutions of the strange, weird, and fascinating war-dance of the kafir nation was proceeding, while the dancers glided or darted to and fro with sinuous, snake-like movements, in curving figures, or, with flashing eyes, poised their assegais in feigned attack upon a supposititious enemy, a circumstance occurred which excited apprehension in the camp. Umhlonlo, about 100 yards distant, was observed to be holding a secret consultation with about thirty or forty of his indunas and chief counsellors, and messages were frequently passed between them and the old men sitting near the dancers. Under his breath Hope ordered his police to load their carbines secretly.

This ominous consultation lasted about four hours, the dancing meanwhile being vigorously maintained. At one o'clock the suspicious consultation ceased, and all those who took part in it, except only the chief Umhlonlo, who advanced to the magistrate's marquee, assumed their places in the midst of the circle and mingled in the dance. Umhlonlo bore his stabbing assegai, and carried his double breech-loading gun in his hand, when he sat down in the marquee, saying to Hope, "The men are ready to be enrolled."

Before proceeding to the dancers to enrol the men, the magistrate invited the chief to "have a liquor." All in the marquee partook of the refreshment, Hope urging upon the chief the importance of pressing forward that evening to meet a contingent of Barkly volunteers at Ruitter's Place. Umhlonlo replied nonchalantly that he was well aware of the urgency of the matter and that delay was unnecessary, but, he added, "the enrolment will not occupy much time."

It was at this moment that Hope's suspicions assumed a concrete form in his mind. He had been restless all the morning; doubt, suspicion, and apprehension had alternated with hope. He had no longer any doubt; he had divined the purpose of Umhlonlo. Speaking in English, he advised his companions to carry their revolvers and carbines. "It is my belief," he declared, "that we are going to have our throats cut."

He called his dog, "Pasha," and when the animal bounded towards him joyously, he patted its head affectionately, murmuring audibly, "Good boy, then; good old Pasha! It may be the last time, old fellow!"

The four Europeans—Hope, Davis, Warren, and Henman—then walked with Umhlonlo up to the dancers, who were grouped on a rise opposite the camp, about forty yards distant. The semi-circle of dancers extended to about 500 yards in length, with an opening in the top about ten yards wide. Through this aperture the party entered the circle, preceded by the false, treacherous, and cruel native chief.

"I feel tired," said Hope, sitting down and lighting his pipe, adding in an aside to Davis, "I may as well have another smoke before my throat is cut." Warren and Henman were standing next to Hope on his right, Davis being on his left, next to Umhlonlo.

Umhlonlo paused a moment, looking about him, with furtive glances towards his indunas and councillors. The moment was electrical to the doomed men, who calmly and stolidly waited, wondering from which quarter the apprehended treachery would spring. Assuming the grave oratorical air of the dominant native chief who speaks to his own people with power and authority, Umhlonlo continued his grim farce of pretending to supply a contingent for the war. He drew up his supple, striking figure to its fullest height and, holding his head aloft and waving one hand with a dignified gesture, he addressed his people.

"Pondomise," he said, "we are all Government children. The Government is our father. He has asked us to perform a duty, and we are here to perform it. I have not any words to say. The words you will hear from your magistrate. I go aside with his clerk (Davis) to tell him what I wish the magistrate to say to the men who are going out to fight."

This was the signal for the exemption of Davis, whom Umhlonlo had determined to save. Davis turned to his chief, and asked if he permitted his going aside with Umhlonlo.

"Go, by all means," Hope assented; "but look sharp back; I want to start."

"Very well, sir," rejoined Davis, and went out with the chief.

Umhlonlo took Davis by the arm, saying, "Come along, Sunduza" (the kafir name for Davis), "and I will tell you what I wish the magistrate to say." He took him out of the circle, through the opening, to a distance of about ten yards, and stood still, turning his face to the ring. Then Davis, from his secure vantage under the protection of the treacherous Umhlonlo, witnessed the terrible tragedy.

The dancers, having thus got the mot d'ordre, closed in on the magistrate and his two companions, and, when near enough, their grotesque and fantastic feints of attack upon an imaginary foe became grim, ghastly earnest. Hope folded his arms and looked at the fiends with a steadfast gaze, mouth firmly closed and eyes brightened in scorn of fear; gazed at a sea of faces convulsed with demoniacal hatred and wicked blood-lust. His two companions displayed an equally heroical composure. They gazed as one being, united sympathetically by the resolve to die like men. The throbbing multitude surged closer in one swift symmetrical motion; six hundred assegais were poised in the stabbing attitude. The bale-fires of hate, and savage ire, and gleaming treachery, and wolf-like joy of the scent of blood, distorted the thick-crowding faces of the dusky horde. With one accord six hundred throats uttered the terrible, bodeful, "He-e-ee-eh!" the prelude of death.

There was no escape, no chance of defence. The very breath of the murderers was upon their victims, and a thousand eyes were riveted upon their devoted faces. To lift a finger, to stir a muscle, to glance aside even was to precipitate the doom. Like the hum of a thousand thousand bees, concentrated sibilation of hellish fury, rang out on the still noontide air the death signal:

"He-e-ee-eh!"

The atmosphere pulsated with the sound, which vibrated the bodies of the listening kafirs who formed the ring outside of the dancers, and seemed to quiver over the scattered clumps of mimosa bush and little groves of wild aloe, and buffeted with a vivid concussion the high masses of rock boulders in the long distance, only to echo back from the ring of undulating headland like the surge of doom:

"He-e-ee-eh!"

Then Mahlageni, Umhlonlo's executioner, a great, gaunt, muscular figure, sprang from midmost of the circle of murderers, and, suddenly clutching Hope's beard with his left hand, with a swift, clean, deadly thrust struck his assegai through his left breast with his right hand. The stab was potent and effectual, the weapon coming out of a terrible, gaping, ghastly wound at the back. As Hope fell, Davis, in the distance, noticed the blood trickling from a wound in his forehead. Warren was knocked down and rolled about with brutal ferocity upon the points of assegais before he was finally despatched, his dead body showing fifty wounds. Henman was hewn down from behind with assegais. All three died almost simultaneously. Blood flowed all round the immediate vicinity of the butchered heroes; the place was a mere shambles. Hope and Warren were laid face downwards; Henman was placed on his back, with arms bent and hands clenched. Thus was the black tragedy of Sulenkama consummated.

Davis, the unwilling and agonised spectator of this awful scene, was restrained from any attempt at interference by Umhlonlo. When he reached for his revolver the chief seized his arm.

"What are you going to do?" he asked.

"I am going to shoot," said Davis.

Three men came behind and forcibly took possession of his pistol and carbine. After the tragedy just described a hundred of the murderers, not being in sympathy with their chief's defence of Davis, and their appetite for blood being whetted, made a charge for Davis; but Umhlonlo threw his arm round him, called three men to his assistance, and, taking out his stabbing assegai, haughtily demanded to know what they meant by attacking a man he had deigned to protect. They fell back, daunted for the moment by the chief's resolute front, but they renewed the charge, led on by the executioner, Mahlageni, whose assegai was besmeared and dripping with the blood of the murdered magistrate.

Umhlonlo, taking up his gun, declared, in enraged tones, that he would shoot any man who offered to stab Davis.

Before sending Davis away under an escort of 35 men, Umhlonlo gave him his effects, and Hope's watch and gold pencil-case, both covered with blood, the watch-glass cracked and the hands pointing to five minutes past one o'clock, the moment of the assassination. The murdered magistrate's clothes, also covered with gore, were brought and thrown at Davis's feet

Umhlonlo then explained to Davis that he had saved his life because he was the son and brother of a missionary, and that he was liked by his people and himself. The chief stated that he had no quarrel against him, his quarrel being with the Government and their magistrate. He further stated that the tribes were determined to rebel rather than submit to the enforcement of Sprigg's Disarmament Act; and they would equally oppose the Branding Act; and the tribes were united in opposition to the Government; that, in short, the horrible deed he sanctioned was to be interpreted as a political act, done at the suggestion of the Paramount Chief, Umquikela, who thus wished to intimidate the Government and extort concessions which could not be obtained by constitutional methods. He refused permission for the burial of the bodies of his victims; and when, three days later, Davis returned with his brother, the missionary, from Qumbu, and again petitioned for this favour, he persisted in his refusal, the barbarian replying that the birds of the air must eat the bodies, otherwise the medicines the Pondomise had doctored would be ineffectual in fighting against the white man.

It is a miserable story of race antagonism and narrow-minded misgovernment, which resulted in the sacrifice of the lives of these three noble sons of the empire, whose flesh was left to be devoured by ravening vultures, and the dust of whose bones, unsepultured, was blown abroad upon the winds of heaven. Its moral is summed up in the poet's fervid question:

> "What can they know of England who only England know?"

But if the bones of Hamilton Hope and his noble comrades have no burial place, their monument is assured. They did their duty. Their memories remain, like beacons on the outposts of the empire, to enlighten and refresh our patriotic ideals, and to fan that flame which is ever augmented in true British hearts by the spectacle of heroic courage, unsubdued by fear and imminent deadly peril, and loyal and consistent faith and duty fulfilling themselves, even unto death.

Not Quite All.

A FELLOW in Dublin had, in the year 1817, committed some trifling offence, for which the judge pronounced the following sentence:

Judge: "The sentence of the court is that you shall be flogged from the bank to the quay."

Prisoner (hastily interrupting the judge): "Thank you, my lord; you have done your worst."

Judge: "No—and back again."

He Thought It Wrong Then.

"COME, now," said the chaplain, "be frank with me. Did there never come a moment—not even one—when you felt some compunction for your crimes? Did it never occur to you, in your sinful life of robbery, that you were doing wrong?"

"Yes, guv'nor, it often did," was the candid reply of the burglar; "many a time it has flashed on me that I was in the nursery, where the first flash of a bull's-eye would waken half-a-dozen howling kids, when I ought to have been in the old man's bedrooms a-skinnin' his trousers and going through the drawers and boxes in a proper professional way. Oh, yes, I've often felt as I was doing wrong; but," apologetically, "that was when I was a new hand at the business, you know!"

Cautious.

THE late Judge Hawkins, who has always had the reputation of being a keen man in pecuniary matters, used to tell a good story somewhat at his own expense. His first brief was to defend one of two men charged with coining, and when they were placed in the dock he overheard a brief colloquy between them.

Prisoner No. 1 told his comrade that he was to be defended by a very good man, Mr. ——, the son of a judge. The other coiner said that he also was defended. He didn't know what the gentleman's name was, but indicating Mr. Hawkins, who was apparently immersed in his brief, he said admiringly, "He's a smart one, too. When I handed over the fee, he put the quid—i.e., sovereign—between his teeth, and bit it. He's the chap for my money!"

THE TERRIBLE

THUGS.

A brief account of the monstrous murderers of the Far East.

FOR readers in happy England the word "Thug" conjures up no dreadful picture, even if its significance be understood, but to dwellers in the Far East the little monosyllable has a terrible import. True, the Government of India has assured its master, the India Office, time and again, that Thugs are extinct in the Peninsula, but for all that the Anglo-Indian who takes the trouble to study the people among whom his lot is cast, and who understands the veiled chatter of the bazaar, knows perfectly well that Thuggee is not dead, though the activity of the police has restricted the operations of the secret society. What, then, are these Thugs, whose practices, or Thuggee, are so much feared by our Indian fellow-subjects? Why are the police ever on the alert to capture a Thug if they can recognise him?

The answer is simple enough. The Thugs were a body of men banded together for the purpose of committing murders under the name of Thuggee. With them, to take a life was an act of merit, and if they happened to be caught and forced to pay the penalty for their deeds on the scaffold, they accepted their punishment, not as the result of their murderous careers, but as the just retribution for some minor omen unnoticed by them.

The early history of Thuggee is wrapped in obscurity, and one can only judge of its probable origin by its tenets. The patroness of the Thugs was Bowani, who is better known to English readers under her name of Kali, the savage goddess, in whose honour the Hindu suffers untold tortures, allowing himself to be swung in the air by huge hooks passed under his shoulder-blades, and lacerating himself with knives in an access of religious frenzy. But Bowani was not actually worshipped by her devotees. She was a patroness pure and simple, protecting those who performed tasks pleasing to her, whatever their religious creed might be. Accordingly we find that when in its prime the Society of Thugs had quite as many Mohammedan members as Hindus. In fact, the relation between Thuggee and religion was precisely the same as to-day exists between religion and Freemasonry. Thuggee was a species of additional creed.

The services which Kali, or Bowani, required of her followers consisted chiefly in the sacrifice of human beings, but certain classes were exempt. In her early life Bowani had been slighted by the male gods, and, in revenge, she waged relentless warfare against man. Still the slaughter of those who were physically imperfect, of sweepers and menials, and of white folk was displeasing to her, and, with the immolation of women and young children, only to be undertaken when absolutely necessary from reasons of prudence.

In return, Bowani bestowed on her devotees immunity from capture, wealth, derived from the spoils of the slain, freedom from certain diseases, and success in whatever walks of life they chose.

From this last sentence it will be gathered that Thugs did not always follow their abominable calling. Only at certain seasons did they go forth on their missions of destruction, and during the rest of their lives were law-abiding citizens, highly respected by those who had not the faintest idea of the true business by which the supposed trader accumulated his wealth. Moreover, unless pressed by absolute want, the Thug did not commit murder alone, or at unusual seasons, for the killing was an act of merit, which it was the duty of the true Thug to share with his brethren, all of whom had an equal part in the reward.

Initiation into the secret society took place when the neophyte, who was generally the son of a Thug, was about eighteen years of age. Fasting and meditation and a bath preceded the actual ceremony, which was always held at night, when the moon was full, and generally in the month of September, when the rainy season was over. The candidate was introduced, blindfolded, into the circle of Thugs, and, after listening to a lengthy exposition on the tenets of the band, accompanied by an account of the swift death which he was to expect if he betrayed his brethren, took an oath to pursue Thuggee faithfully and to be a true and loyal member of the fraternity. This done, he was uncovered, and was generally much astonished to find that he was surrounded by many of the most respected men in his district who in daily life might be goldsmiths, silk merchants, or wealthy cultivators. The oath was again repeated by him, and he was bidden to seal the compact by kissing the sacred pickaxe, or "hulkari," which was the standard of the company.

Admitted a Thug, he was not considered to be a fully-qualified member until he had slain his first victim, but, before he was able to do this, he had to witness the death of several, and to learn how to manipulate the "rumal," or handkerchief, which was the Thug's only weapon. At the initiation ceremony, which was generally the opening night of a campaign, an expedition was planned, and on the following evening the Thugs met to take the omens which would be granted to them by Bowani.

At the midnight meeting prayers were offered up to the hideous goddess, and then the Thugs sat in silence, waiting to catch the first sound. Should it be the braying of a donkey on the right, then everything pointed to a successful campaign, and the pickaxe, which had been lying on the ground, pointing to the north, was picked up and handed to an old Thug, who bore it throughout the whole expedition

The poor woman struggled violently.

There were very many signs which were regarded as favourable, all of which had to be learnt by the Thug, as well as those which foretold disaster, and so superstitious were these hardened murderers that, no matter what the probabilities of loot might be, nothing would induce a true follower of Bowani to kill a man unless the goddess gave a

favourable omen. The sure punishment for disregarding the portents was capture and ignominious death.

All being satisfactory, the Thugs set forth on their travels, posing as a band of merchants going to some southern city to purchase goods. As they returned laden with loot they changed their rôle to that of traders who had just effected their yearly purchases.

Now, as to the constitution of the band. The leader was known as the jemadar, and in his hands lay the distribution of the spoils as well as the actual rule over the band. Next to him were his counsellors, elderly Thugs selected from the various classes, whose advice was considered sound, and who spoke in the interests of the sections of the society which they represented. Their advice, however, was merely offered, the jemadar being in no way obliged to follow it. Indeed, at the opening of every campaign the Thugs who were to take part in the foray swore allegiance to the jemadar alone, and trusted implicitly in him.

Of the classes, the "rumalis," or executioners, were the most esteemed. They were for the most part full-grown men, possessed of more than the average amount of physical strength. Their duty it was to throw the handkerchief, or "rumal," round the neck of the victim, and strangle him. There was a recognised method of doing this, and in the hands of a skilled "rumali" the handkerchief was just as deadly and almost as speedy as the hangman's noose. Indeed, it is not so long ago that an old Thug who was serving a life sentence in the Andaman Islands demonstrated to the Governor of Madras that he could kill a goat instantaneously by passing the handkerchief round its neck and by one dexterous twist of the wrist breaking the backbone. The candidate was carefully taught by one of these stranglers how to manipulate the rumal, for no matter to what class he eventually wished to belong, or for which he might be considered fit, it was a law among the Thugs that every member must kill at least one man.

The second section of the slayers were the enticers, whose duty it was to lure wealthy travellers to their doom and to go into the villages and bazaars and get into conversation with merchants, persuading them to accompany them to some city where business was brisk. They were very expert at disguises, and could adopt many rôles.

Last came the buriers, who had to prepare the graves for the victims, generally before the attack was made, and later to bury the bodies of those who had been slain. They were regarded as the lowest class of Thug. Another of their duties was to hold the legs and arms of any victim who might struggle violently, so as to give the rumali a fair chance of killing his man.

With our party thus constituted, let us accompany a typical expedition from Northern India, where Thugs most abounded, towards Hyderabad, Deccan; Gwalior, Boondee, and Jeypore produced the most Thugs, and their forays generally led them southward through Guzerat, Bhopaul, Khandeish, and Berar, into Hyderabad, their routes thus crossing most of the principal caravan roads running from west to east across the peninsula.

The band travels together, some on ponies, others on foot, and to the ordinary observer seems to be but a party of merchants with their servants. The leader every now and then tells off a couple of the enticers to go on ahead to some village which they are approaching to find out if anyone is about to travel from that place, for it is the season of the year when the traders from all the outlying districts go to the central marts to buy fresh goods. The first two days' travel pass uneventfully enough, for the leader judges it wise to refrain from "sacrifice" till some distance from his own country. For all that the enticers have marked down several "bunnias" who are going to Hyderabad to sell some jewels which they have purchased in the course of their year's trading. These the leader permits to get ahead of him, knowing that he can overtake them when he wants to. On the third day, however, the party falls in with an elderly Hindu, accompanied by his wife and a couple of servants. Some of the lower class Thugs have been dressed as native soldiers, and the enticers make use of this to point out to the old merchant how much safer it would be for him if he were to travel under their protection. He is told that the soldiers are guarding the goods of a very wealthy jeweller who is taking a selection of gems to be submitted to His Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad, and that if he would care to share in their protection there is little doubt that the merchant could be coaxed to allow him to journey with them. The poor old trader, who is much alarmed at the dangers of the road, begs his friends to plead with their leader for him, and offers a bribe of twenty rupees to secure

"DON'T YOU KNOW WHEN A MAN IS DEAD?"

their good will, inadvertently telling them that he is taking the sum of five thousand rupees down to the city to make extensive purchases for his son, who is about to set up a shop for himself.

After a little demur, the jemadar graciously permits the old Hindu to join his caravan, and from that moment trader, wife, and servants are marked for death. They have become "bunij," to use the Thug's own word. The gravediggers are sent on ahead to select a suitable spot for the coming burial, and after a while return saying that it is impossible to find a good place until a site convenient for the evening camp is reached, but that there great facilities for the disposal of corpses exists. The execution is accordingly postponed until then. Towards evening the spot for the camp is found, and soon a meal is prepared, and the merchant invited to share in the leader's mess. He accepts, and after dinner all—servants, women, and Thugs—gather round the fire and commence story telling.

If we watch, we will notice that after a time one of the executioner class has managed to take up a position behind each of the doomed persons, the movements being effected without creating suspicion. Still the chatter goes on, until the leader gives the signal, which is generally some harmless phrase in everyday use, such as "Pan Lao!" "Bring me some betel nuts!" Then for a second or so all is confusion.

Swiftly the fatal handkerchief is flung round the necks of the four victims, and in an instant the old man lies a corpse on the ground. The servants, too, die quickly, but the woman is not so fortunate. Possibly the Thug slipped at the critical moment, and did not place the rumal properly. Anyhow, the poor creature struggles violently, her eyes start out of her head. Her arms are secured by the assisants, one of whom deals her a heavy blow in the stomach to hasten her death, but at least three minutes elapse before she breathes her last, having been slowly strangled.

The bodies are then stripped of any valuables that may be on them, and the gravediggers take them off for sepulture in the deep pit which they had prepared earlier in the evening. The leader of the Thugs goes to see the last of the victims, and orders the ghouls to rip open each body before throwing it into the grave, so that the swelling of the body may not displace the earth. Within a quarter of an hour the grave is filled up, and it would require a very keen observer to mark anything strange in the spot, so skilful are the Thugs at concealing the traces of their crimes.

The party then fall to chatting until midnight, when a most important ceremony has to be performed. The band assemble just as they did for the initiation, and several invocations to Bowani are offered. Then the leader produces some coarse cane sugar, known as "goor," and lays this on the sacred pickaxe while he repeats a lengthy formula. All true Thugs present are then given a morsel of this sugar to eat, but the newly initiated is not allowed to taste the "goor" because he has not yet killed a man.

The ceremony over the jemadar divides the spoil into a number of equal parts and the division is made according to a fixed scale, each pile being apportioned by lot should there be any difference in them. The strangler who bungled over the woman is fined one half of his share, which is divided between those who held the poor creature's arms. Then the camp retires to rest. Sometimes the Thugs agree that the spoil shall be held by the jemadar until the close of the campaign, and then sold by him in the best market, and the proceeds divided.

Next day the Thugs move on, and a week passes before any booty of note is marked down. This time it is a silk merchant who is found leaving one of the small villages on the route. He earnestly begs to be permitted to travel with the gang, as he is conveying a quantity of specie to Ellichpore to buy silk. His request is granted, and as he will be in such good company he sends his servants home to save him expense. Incidentally he also saves their lives.

The jemadar quickly makes up his mind. The trader is "bunij," and must be killed as soon as possible. On go the diggers, and shortly return, reporting that after about half an hour's ride the caravan will pass through a narrow defile leading to some water, where the mid-day meal can be taken. From the stream the road leads through some dense jungle, affording excellent burying ground.

The water reached, the party halt for refreshment, and the diggers go forward to prepare a grave. Then, after a rest, the caravan sets out again. To the novice the honourable task of killing the guest is assigned, and as the band enter the jungle path he takes up his position beside him, nervously fingering his handkerchief, which is concealed in his waistband, and anxiously watching the jemadar.

Soon the sign is given—the fatal "Pan Lao!" is uttered—and the newly-made Thug strives to put into practice the lessons which he has been learning from the experienced stranglers. He manages to get the silk square round his victim's neck all right, and then turns his palms towards his own chest, pressing the knuckles of both hands against the side of his quarry's throat as he has been taught to do. He exerts all his strength, expecting every moment for the trader to begin to struggle, straining his arms till he is almost exhausted. The other Thugs stand looking on. At last a voice reaches him through the buzzing in his ears—"Don't you know when a man is dead, Jumal?" That breaks the spell, and he realises that the poor creature has been dead from the moment that the handkerchief tightened on his throat. No wonder he did not struggle. Then a wonderful feeling overcame him. It is easy to kill a man—so easy. And so satisfactory. Oh, for another victim! So the blood lust descended on the new Thug, and he became at once a menace to society. That night he, too, partook of the "goor," and was hailed as a true Thug.

Then the party began to get into richer ground, and not a day passed without one or more falling as sacrifices to Bowani, and among the stranglers none was more keen than the freshly-made Thug. So the days of each expedition went on, and it was considered a very bad year if each member of the party did not receive some thousands of rupees as his share of the spoils when the gang of murderers returned to their villages and accounted for their absence to their friends by saying that they had been away trading, and had brought back the result of their enterprises.

Occasionally one or more Thugs fell into the hands of the police and were in due course executed, but their followers only said that they had omitted to take the omens or had disregarded the warnings of Bowani, and were in no wise frightened. Then the British Government took up the matter and strove to suppress Thuggee, and to a great measure they were successful, but it is absurd to say that they have managed to free the country from Thugs. Yearly large numbers of rich Hindus vanish, and their absence is accounted for by saying that they have been killed by tigers or have fallen victims to deadly snakes. Those very excuses were used in the days when Thuggee flourished! As long as the Hindu religion lasts so long will Thuggee be found in India, though, of course, organised expeditions are no longer possible on the same scale as obtained forty years ago. Then one band alone would commit from a hundred to four hundred murders in the course of a single campaign, lasting about a couple of months. Now the Thugs have to be satisfied with occasional murders when opportunity offers, but when they do get a chance of propitiating their beloved Bowani they are not slow to avail themselves of it.

A Sanguinary Duel.

Two pupils at a finishing school at Odessa quarrelled over a young lady, and resolved to settle their dispute by a duel. They selected revolvers as the weapons with which to secure "satisfaction," and it was arranged between them that after the encounter the survivor should place the body of the one who succumbed on the railway line, in a field near which the duel was to be fought. The idea was that the corpse would be mutilated by a passing train, and thus deceive the authorities as to the real cause of death. This pleasing idea was, however, frustrated by the fact that at the very first shots one of the contestants was killed outright and the other dangerously wounded, and left hors de combat on the field of battle.

A Narrow Escape.

In the year 1837 a man named Robert Lutas was tried at Nottingham for the murder of a shopkeeper of that city. The evidence was purely of a circumstantial nature, and very strongly against the prisoner, who, however, vehemently asserted his innocence of the crime, though he was unable to account for his whereabouts on the night of the tragedy. He was eventually found guilty, and the judge proceeded to pass sentence of death. His lordship had just said the words: "You shall be hanged by the neck till you are dead," when one of the jurymen was observed to rise to his feet, with a folded paper in his hand, which he tried to throw towards the unfortunate man in the dock. The paper fell in front of the jury-box, and the juryman sank to the floor in an insensible condition. A doctor was called, but the man was dead. On the paper being opened it was found to be a confession of the murder of the shopkeeper by the juryman. Heart disease was said by the doctor to be the cause of death. Lutas was soon afterwards liberated, and he ever afterwards declared that he owed his escape to the Divine intervention.

A Nocturnal Surprise.

Father Saved by a Brave Girl.

An Extraordinary Sequel.

The Rev. MATTHEW BUCKLE
AND HIS DAUGHTER
— Shot by Burglars. —

"Mercy is not itself that oft looks so;
Pardon is still the nurse of second woe."
—SHAKESPEARE, "Measure for Measure."

EDLINGHAM, about eight miles from Alnwick, in Northumberland; is a quiet enough village, and in the seventies was dubbed by the few who visited it the sleepiest hamlet in the county. Of course, it boasted of its general shop, at which everything from a needle, a pin, or a lady's corset to a pair of hob-nailed boots, a penn'orth of pills, or a bladder of lard could be bought; and there was the butcher, who made a display of meat once a week; and the village barber, who flourished the instrument of torture around the lathered chins of the yokels on Saturdays only. And when we have mentioned the carpenter, who was at the same time wheelwright and undertaker, we have summed up the whole of the tradesfolk of Edlingham. Of the professions represented there were few, for the nearest medical man was to be found at Alnwick; so if we mention the village schoolmaster and the parson we complete the list, for there was no need for the attorney, and a policeman at this particular period was thought quite unnecessary.

Still, there was now and then a little excitement created by the misdoings of the villagers or those whose cottages were scattered about the neighbourhood, and on more than one occasion some of the farmhouses had been broken into during the night and valuables stolen, until it became necessary to complain to the authorities at Alnwick and request that some steps should be taken to prevent a recurrence of these nocturnal visits. Amongst those who had suffered was the parson of the parish, Mr. Matthew Hughes George Buckle, the rectory having been entered on three occasions. The thieves, however, had been very modest in their demands, for they confined their attentions to the pantry and the wine cellar in which the wine for communion and, we presume, the rector's guests was stocked. On the third visit a most extraordinary incident happened, which proved that one of the thieves at least had a conscience and caused the reverend gentleman to freely forgive those who had invaded his larder, for, as he said to his daughter, "The poor fellows must have been very hungry to have run such risks. I deny my bread to no man." On this particular occasion the thieves had cleared the pantry completely out of cooked and raw food, and had made a pretty good demand upon the wine, so that it was necessary for Miss Buckle to go shopping on the following day before they could sit down to a meal.

Next morning, however, neatly wrapped up in a parcel and placed upon the doorstep was a leg of mutton, which the parson had intended for the Sunday's dinner, but which had been stolen with the other food. The thieves had regretted having deprived the clergyman, and good-naturedly returned it, much to the delight of the cook and the satisfaction of the reverend gentleman.

Of course, the police were notified, and they made themselves very busy for a few weeks, and, although declaring that they knew those who were implicated in these petty thefts, they were unable to make an arrest without obtaining more evidence, which was not forthcoming.

Amongst those suspected were two men named Michael Branigham and Peter Murphy, both labourers, and both bearing shady characters, one of them having been convicted of poaching. That was sufficient; the man who would snare a rabbit, kill a hare, or shoot a pheasant (let him be on the verge of starvation) was a marked felon in those days, and it was "To gaol wi' him!" Dickens so happily sketches this character, that we cannot do better than quote him, for it is a true picture of Michael Branigham, who is to play a leading part in our narrative of the Edlingham crime.

Our author makes the poacher, Will Fern, say before the justices, "Now, gentlemen, see how your laws are made to hunt and trap us when we're brought to this. I tries to live elsewhere; and I'm a vagabond. To gaol with him! I comes back here, I goes out nutting in your woods, and breaks—who don't?—a limber branch or two. To gaol with him! I cuts a stick. To gaol with him! I eats a rotten apple or a turnip. To gaol with him! It's twenty miles away, and, coming back, I begs a trifle on the road. To gaol with him! At last the constable, the keeper—anybody—finds me anywhere, a-doing anything. To gaol with him, for he's a vagrant, and a gaol-bird known; and gaol's the only home he's got."

Such a type of character drawn by our great novelist was Michael Branigham, a man about forty-four years of age, who, because he had done a bit of poaching, had the fingers of all good people pointed at him, and the police, like sleuth-hounds, were upon his track when anything went wrong for miles round. So, naturally, the knowing authorities of Alnwick came to the conclusion that Master Michael and his intimate chum, Peter Murphy, were at the bottom of the burglaries that had been committed, and were accountable for the episode of the parson's leg of mutton. Nevertheless, the police had no positive proof. And so matters went on, not too comfortably, in the little hamlet of Edlingham.

It was the eve of February 7, 1879, and the place was, if possible, duller than ever. At the rectory, however, things were snug enough, and the great wood fire in the well-furnished sitting-room cast its light over the apartment, making it look very comfortable, as the wind howled through the leafless trees outside. The only occupants of the room were father and daughter, the Rev Mr. Matthew Buckle and Georgina, a girl of some eighteen years of age. The old gentleman, with his silvery locks, had been pastor at Edlingham for no less a period than forty years, and had performed more christening, marriage, and funeral ceremonies than any other clergyman, perhaps, in the county. He was much loved and respected, whilst his daughter was the idol of the village, a bright, happy girl, who was always ready to help the poor and fly to the side of a sick-bed. She had lost her mother some years before, and now was her father's support, and, besides her self-imposed parochial duties, kept house and looked after things generally.

Georgina Buckle was the constant companion of the parson, and after tea upon this particular evening the girl read to her father as the old gentleman sat in his easy-chair before the fire, until the hour was well on to ten o'clock, their customary bedtime. As the clock pointed to the hour Miss Buckle rang the bell for their candles, and the cook, Jane Brown, having replied, lit them, saw to the fastenings of the windows, and was told that she might retire for the night. Then Georgina, taking her gold watch and chain from her neck and pocket, placed them upon the mantelpiece, kissed her father affectionately, said, "Good night," and made her way to her room.

Mr. Buckle remained alone for about a quarter of an hour, when, after raking some of the fuel off the fire, he also went to bed, it being then about 10.30 o'clock. The weather had been terrible for weeks past in the North of England, with heavy falls of snow, followed by incessant rain; but on this particular night the moon was nearly at the full, and shone brightly over the country. All was quiet in the rectory, and what few neighbours there were had long since retired for the night, and the whole country round was in silence, broken only by the moaning of the wind.

It must have been about half-past one in the morning when Mr. Buckle, a very light sleeper, was awakened by a noise that appeared to come from the rooms below. Raising himself in bed, the old gentleman listened attentively for a few moments, and again he distinctly heard somebody moving about. The light of the moon shone brightly into his apartment as it fell upon the old man's snow-white

locks and pale face. Gently he turned the handle of the door and again paused. Yes; it was no fancy this time. He distinctly heard footsteps and the sound of subdued conversation. He was a brave old fellow, this parson of Edlingham, for, in spite of his age, he was determined to seek out the intruders. Quickly crossing the room to a cupboard, he took from its sheath an old cavalry sword, which had seen service at Waterloo, and had been kept as an heirloom. Then, making his way to the landing, he was for the moment startled by what appeared to be an apparition. It was his daughter Georgina in her night-dress, and she clutched her father's arm.

"Hush!" she said, under her breath. "For heaven's sake, father, don't go down. There are robbers in the house. They will kill you. Oh, pray stay where you are, and I will ring the bell and alarm the house. Father dear, do not risk it. There are several there, and what can you do alone?"

"My God!" he uttered to himself, "what have I done? The blood of this man will be on my hands—on my hands—the hands of the servant of the Almighty! Rather had I lost everything in this world than have stained my hands with a fellow-creature's blood!" Then aloud he shouted, "Speak, men, I command you! What have I done?"

But there was no answer, and at that moment the parson felt the warm, heaving breast of his daughter against him, and her arms clasped him round the neck.

"Come away! quick, father, come away! They will kill you! I heard the click of a fire-arm. Come with me; quick, dear, before it is too——"

Bang went the report of a gun, and the room for an instant was illuminated by a flash. The cowards had fired at the poor old man and his helpless daughter.

There was a noisy scuffle, a rattle at the window, then all was silence for a moment as the parson sank upon his knees

HE CAME UPON THE INTRUDERS UNEXPECTEDLY.

But the old man, his eyes flashing as he thought of the helpless girl beside him, gently but firmly pushed her aside and stole down the stairs. In one hand he held the sword, and in the other a candle which he had lighted as he left the room. With the speed of youth he ran down the stairs and entered the open dining-room door. So suddenly had he appeared, and so noiselessly had been his movements, that he came upon the intruders unexpectedly, and scared them for the moment as they beat a retreat into the apartment. The room was quite dark, save the light shed by the candle, and he was only able to discern two figures, but before he had time to recognise the faces of either, the candle was suddenly extinguished.

"Villains!" cried the old man. "What do you here in my quiet home?" And in the heat of the moment, regardless of all consequences, he rushed in the direction whence the voices of the men proceeded, with the sword at point, and lunged furiously at them. He struck the blade against something soft, and then, dropping the weapon, all the feelings of dread and fear came into his mind.

in the darkness before the prostrate body of his daughter, who lay groaning upon the floor, terribly wounded. The silence lasted but a short time, for it was broken by the piercing shrieks of Jane Brown, the cook, who stood upon the stairs calling, "Help! help! Murder! murder!"

Mr. Buckle shouted for her to come at once, and, after a little hesitation, she brought a light, when she was horrified to discover that Miss Georgina had been wounded in the lower part of the body. The poor bleeding girl was carried to her room by the servant and her father, when it was discovered that he also had received a shot-wound, which was, however, not so serious.

As quickly as possible assistance was procured from neighbouring house, and a messenger went off post haste for a surgeon and to acquaint the police at Alnwick, some six miles distant.

Dr. Wilson arrived about two hours after the outrage and attended to his patients, pronouncing the wounds inflicted upon Mr. Buckle as slight, but those of his daughter serious. In the meanwhile, the police had been very active. Con-

stables were sent out to scour the country and watch all approaches to the town, whilst Superintendent Harker and his assistants paid a visit to all the well-known bad characters in the district demanding admission to their dwellings in order to discover if they were at home in bed.

Two suspected characters, Michael Branigham and Peter Murphy, were absent, and orders were sent out to seek for them and immediately arrest them on suspicion. They were known to the police as rather desperate characters, and had, more than once, been brought up charged with poaching, and therefore believed to be the likely perpetrators of the outrage. About six o'clock in the morning they were seen coming in the direction of Alnwick, and were immediately taken into custody and eventually charged and committed for trial.

The examination is too long and tedious for us to go into every detail. Matters certainly looked very black against them. The footprints (casts of which were taken) agreed with the boots worn by one of the men, the marks of corduroy trousers upon the window frame, and a piece of paper which had been used to load the gun with, agreed with some found upon one of the prisoners, and the chisel with which an entrance had been forced, and which was afterwards found, proved to be one that had been in the house where Branigham lived. Altogether, circumstantial evidence was very strong against them, and the judge remarked in his summing up that frequently such evidence was stronger proof of guilt than that which was sworn.

Still the jury were reluctant to convict, and after considering their verdict for one hour and a-half late in the evening without coming to a decision, the judge retired to his lodgings.

At ten o'clock at night the jury left the Moot House, having agreed, and proceeded to the judge's rooms, where a court was opened, and, in the presence of the prisoners a verdict of "Guilty" was returned.

That this created a great surprise in many quarters was certain, and the verdict was by no means universally popular, for, after all, they had been convicted entirely upon circumstantial evidence, and much that had been sworn to by the witnesses for the prosecution was not credited outside.

The watch and chain, the only articles stolen, had not been recovered, whilst the defence had been made very little use of, the only real rebutting evidence being that given by Agnes Timm, who lived in the same house as the prisoners, and remembered the police coming there with the chisel and showing it to one of the witnesses, who swore it was his. They did not allow the tool to be taken out of their hands, and she could swear that she had never seen such a chisel in the house. However, the jury found them guilty, and they were brought up on the Thursday to receive sentence.

Mr. Milrain, who had defended the prisoners, said that he had been desired by the Rev. Mr. Buckle to ask his lordship to pass as lenient a sentence as possible upon the prisoners, commensurate with the offence they had committed. There was nothing against them except their poaching propensities. Mr. Buckle also desired it to be stated that one of the prisoners had formerly lived in his parish, and he could not believe that he had fired the gun with the intention to do any harm, but merely through bravado; or that they, on seeing him approach sword in hand, thought to protect their lives by firing. Mr. Buckle also wished it to be pointed out that had they intended any act of violence they had taken no advantage of the opportunity afforded them.

His lordship in passing sentence said the prisoners had been guilty of one of the gravest offences known to the law short of murder; and it was probably owing to the discretion of Miss Buckle in taking her father away that their lives were spared. He had sought in vain for any redeeming circumstances which would justify him in reducing the punishment. It was his duty not so much to punish those who broke the law as to deter others from acting in a similar manner. It was the first object of the law to convince bad characters that they would be subjected to the severest punishment whenever they resorted to such a crime as that of which they had been guilty.

The circumstances were overwhelming against them, and the verdict in his opinion was perfectly correct. Their crime was that of breaking into the residence of a venerable old man and his daughter, with no one, as one of them at all events knew, there to protect them. They went there determined to commit a robbery. He did not think they intended murder, but they did intend to prevent themselves being identified, and, if necessary, to resort to the extremest measures in order to prevent that. He could not doubt that but for the discretion of their not following them to where the light of the moon might have assisted to their identification, beyond all doubt they would again have resorted to violence, because, having done it once, it was only natural they should carry out their intention not to be discovered.

There might be a distinction between the two prisoners, but he could not see it. The offence consisted of burglary accompanied by violence, amounting almost to murder, and if ever the law ought to take its course to the extreme it was in this case. Unquestionably, if death had ensued, both their lives would have been forfeited. Miss Buckle's life was in great danger, and it was a miracle that they were not both condemned to death. He did not hold out any hope; but if the Crown in its mercy should act on the recommendation of Mr. Buckle that was belonging to the Crown and not to him. In order to convince bad characters who broke into peaceable homes and endangered the lives of persons and stole their property, that the law must be vindicated he must pass upon them the severest sentence, and that was penal servitude for life.

A rather remarkable coincidence accompanied this trial, which at the time created a deal of excitement in the county of Northumberland. It afterwards transpired that Edlingham rectory was the birthplace of Sir Henry Manisty, the judge who tried the case, he having been born there in the year 1808. His father was the Rev. James Manisty, and his lordship was the second son. The elder Manisty acted as vicar until his death in 1839, when the Rev. Matthew Geo Buckle, who was previously head-master of Durham University, succeeded him, so that the latter gentleman had resided there for forty years.

The question was frequently asked whether this circumstance had anything to do with the harsh sentence passed by the judge. Without doubt Sir Henry Manisty had some personal feeling in the matter. Whilst considering his verdict at home in his lodgings at Newcastle he must have conjured up the happy episodes of his childhood, and it must have been with no feelings of pleasure that he had to deal with the burglars who had so ruthlessly invaded the sanctity of that once happy home in which he spent the dearest moments of his life—where his father died and where his mother gave him birth. The very room in which the cowardly shot had been fired was that in which he had enjoyed the love of his family and the very room in which Mr. Buckle slept when disturbed by the ruffians was sacred to his own father and mother. Just as Sir Henry was in all his sentences, he would have been more than human if these circumstances had not influenced him in prompting him to deal out the full penalty of the law, and it was indeed a bad job for the two culprits that they had to appear before such a judge.

Leaves from Our Notebook.

A SIMPLE rustic boy, trudging along with a loaf of bread under each arm, met one of the great Unpaid of the district. Offended at the lack of the customary obeisance, the magistrate said, "Boy, I should say you might remove your hat." "So I would," replied the boy, "if you'll hold one of my loaves the while."

THE exact duties of a High Sheriff are not generally known. He is appointed annually by the King to attend the judge at the assizes, empannel juries, and bring suspected persons to trial; afterwards he is to see the sentence of the law executed on them. He decides all elections for knights of the shire, returning those persons to Parliament whom he thinks duly elected; he is also during his office the first man in the county, taking place of the greatest nobleman, and in cases of immediate danger threatened by invasion or rioting, he has a right to command the attendance of the whole body of the people in the county over which he presides.

Replies to Queries

H.B.—Cadwallader Jones was hanged at Dolgelly for the murder of his paramour on November 23, 1877.

THESPIS.—Kotzebue, the German dramatist, was assassinated by Karl Sand on March 23, 1819. The motive of the assassin was political.

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